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E30 325i

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- p29



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Welcome

It will come as no surprise to learn that the very nature of the bizarre year that has been 2020 has also influenced BMW's typical schedule of new car launches and events. BMW UK recently held a press event over the course of a week at the fabulous Bicester Heritage in Oxfordshire. It was an opportunity for media types like ourselves to come along for the day to drive a whole bunch of new BMW and – if applicable – MINI models. As you'll see from the shot below the hanger at the former RAF base was converted into BMW heaven for the course of the event, social distancing measures and buckets of sanitiser were employed to enable those who had missed all or some opportunities to drive BMWs this year to play catch-up.

It was an enjoyable event and it's always very enlightening to drive different new models back-to-back as it is an experience that is rarely available. Wherever you stand on the styling of contemporary BMWs one thing quickly becomes apparent as you jump from car to car in a scenario like this – in reality BMW does not make a "bad" car these days in terms of the driving experience, comfort and convenience features. Each does a job and does it well. We'll be supplementing our usual drip feed of new model drives with findings from our day at Bicester in the coming issues. For now, I hope you enjoy our First Drive of the F40 128ti – a car that guns directly for the VW Golf GTI and one which could bring a number of new enthusiasts to the BMW brand as a result, in that regard it is an important car – p36.

Further into the issue you'll find a broad mix of classic and modern classic BMWs owned and driven by enthusiasts, including a 200,000-mile E30 325i which we hope offers some enlightenment as to whether this is the E30 model that you can still afford to buy and run – p10. Bringing things up to date is the latest offering from BMW specialist and tuner, Birds. We put its 430hp F31 340i Touring – which boasts uprated suspension and a Quaife ATB differential, through its paces, p42.

Lastly, this being the penultimate issue of the year, we hope you enjoy our Christmas Gift Guide (p29). Don't forget to pick up the final issue of the year with your last minute Christmas shopping – it's in shops from 18th December.

Simon Jackson, Editor

 @retro_jackson



Take your pick...

MEET THE CONTRIBUTORS



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BMW News

X5 AND X6 M COMPETITION FIRST EDITION MODELS REVEALED

BMW has unveiled special editions of its X5 and X6 M Competition, production will be limited to 250 examples of each – just 15 have been allocated for the UK market.

BMW has revealed two special editions of the popular X5 M Competition and X6 M Competition, the First Edition models will be highly exclusive with just 250 units scheduled for production – just 15 of those are heading to the UK. Both variants are powered by the twin-turbocharged 4.4-litre V8 engine which, in Competition tune, produces 625hp and 553lb ft of torque. An eight-speed automatic gearbox assists a 0–62mph time of around four-seconds with an electronically limited top speed of 155mph.

As you might expect the specifications of the First Edition models are loaded with exclusive desirable extras. BMW Individual Frozen Dark Silver is an exclusive matt paint finish, also available is BMW Individual Frozen Marina Bay Blue – a shade already available on the

X5, X5 M Competition, X6 and X7.

Staggered (21-inch front, 22-inch rear) lightweight M alloy wheels with a star-spoke design finished in Jet Black high-gloss finish are also exclusive to the special edition models. The exterior styling of the First Edition models includes carbon-fibre-reinforced plastic (CFRP) elements. Amongst them are M Carbon exterior mirror caps and an M Carbon rear spoiler for the X6 M Competition, an M Carbon engine compartment is also part of First Edition specification.

Inside comes BMW Individual Merino leather trim in an exclusive bi-colour Silverstone / Midnight Blue combination with Black Alcantara inserts in the seat bolsters and contrasting Sakhir Orange stitching – the stitching continues to the door panel and instrument

panel trim. A Midnight Blue BMW Individual headliner in Alcantara also features. Carbon Fibre interior trim strips also appear – available in a special, market-specific design, together with a silver 'First Edition' badge. If specified, the trim strip design is carried through to the cup holders, too.

Both special edition models will be produced at BMW Plant Spartanburg in South Carolina, USA, prices for the X5 M Competition First Edition will start from £136,400, the X6 variant will be priced from £139,100. However, those interested should act quickly, just 10 X5 versions (five in each colour) and five X6 First Editions – three silver and two blue – are reportedly coming to the UK. Both models can be ordered now with deliveries expected in spring 2021.



USED BMW BATTERIES GET SECOND LIFE

BMW has found an environmentally-friendly use for used electric car batteries...

BMW has announced a new partnership with Off Grid Energy to create a sustainable, second-life solution for BMW and MINI electric vehicle (EV) batteries. BMW will supply Off Grid Energy – market leaders in energy storage, with battery modules for it to adapt to create mobile power units. The partnerships gives old BMW and MINI EV batteries a useful second-life when they can no longer efficiently be used in cars, that is, of course, important for the environment.

Graeme Grieve, CEO BMW Group UK, said “BMW Group will have 25 electrified models on the roads by 2023 – half of them fully electric. We are delighted to work with Off Grid Energy to find a sustainable way of continuing to use these valuable batteries, even after they have put in many years of service in our electrified cars.”

BMW EV batteries have a warranty of eight years or 100,000-miles. After this period a battery could still retain up to 80 percent of its initial capacity. However, it is inevitable that, at some stage, a battery will no longer function at its optimum level for a car's needs – it can, however, continue to serve a ‘secondary use’ purpose as a mobile power source.

Danny Jones, Managing Director Off Grid Energy said “Off Grid Energy's business model has been built with sustainability at its core, from the way we make our products and the materials we use, through to the environmental impact of our technology. We're extremely excited to be in partnership with BMW Group UK and use our technology to give BMW and MINI electric

vehicle batteries such a valuable second use.”

The first prototype unit is now up and running, powered by lithium-ion battery modules extracted from a MINI Electric development vehicle. It has a 40kWh capacity delivering a 7.2kW fast charge and will be used at BMW and MINI UK events over the next year. As more battery modules become available over time, systems will be built with a capacity of up to 180kWh and able to provide multiple charges at rates of up to 50kW. When these units are used to displace conventional ways of generating temporary power, the battery modules will at least double the CO2 reduction achieved in their original use in the car, continuing their positive impact in reducing carbon emissions.

Sustainability and resource efficiency is central to the BMW Group's strategy. Announcing initial details of the corporate strategic direction in July this year, CEO Oliver Zipse said, “How we use resources will decide the future of our society – and of the BMW Group. As a premium car company, it is our ambition to lead the way in sustainability. That is why we are taking responsibility here and now.”

The company has already sold well over half a million electrified vehicles and will have 25 electrified models on the roads by 2023 – more than half fully electric. The Group expects electrified cars to account for between 15-25 percent of the company's global sales before 2025. By 2021, a quarter of the vehicles sold by the company in Europe will be electrified – that figure is expected to rise to a third by 2025 and half by 2030.



Just 10 X5 versions and five X6 First Editions are reportedly coming to the UK



M4 COMPETITION x KITH

BMW has revealed the special edition M4 Competition x KITH with unique design details – just 150 will be built...

BMW has collaborated with New York-based lifestyle brand Kith on this: a new special edition BMW M4 Competition Coupé. Limited to just 150 units, the model features unique exterior and interior design details that BMW says pick up the "vibe from the youthful and influential fashion scene". Following in the footsteps of BMW's similar collaboration with FUTURA 2000, Kith founder Ronnie Fieg is a self-confessed BMW enthusiast. The BMW M4 Competition x KITH can be pre-ordered now and will be partnered with a 96-piece Kith fashion collection of exclusively designed apparel and accessories – available in all of its stores and online.

"Keeping a close eye on the latest street-style developments is part of our approach to evolving the BMW brand," explained Jens Thiemer, Senior Vice President Customer and Brand BMW. "With his ideas and Kith label, Ronnie Fieg is one of the outstanding minds and opinion leaders in the worlds of fashion, lifestyle and luxury. Our collaboration

with Ronnie and his influential brand will be a positive force for BMW as we explore new customer groups."

"Everything we work on at Kith has to come from an authentic place," said Kith founder, Ronnie Fieg. "Some of my favourite memories from growing up are going to visit my grandfather and riding around in his BMWs in the 1980s. I remember he had an E21 320i and that his prized possession was an E30 M3. These moments in my life really shaped my passion for BMW, so working on this project with them has brought everything full circle." Fieg recently acquired his own example of the legendary E30 M3.

The special-edition model has the same technical profile as the usual M4 Competition Coupé – 510 hp with 479 lb-ft torque and an eight-speed M Steptronic transmission. The special-edition models are available exclusively with the matt paint finishes of Frozen Black, Frozen Dark Silver and Frozen Brilliant White – a homage to the three most popular colours for

the E30 M3. One of the main highlights of the special-edition models is the Kith carbon-fibre roof design. For this optional extra, grey Kith lettering with BMW M stripes are woven into the roof surface. M Compound brakes with red callipers bearing the M logo come as standard. Inside the BMW M4 Competition x KITH the tri-colour M Carbon bucket seats feature the BMW M colours light blue and red which add striking flourishes to the Merino full-leather trim in Black. The centre console features an exclusive badge with the Kith logo and BMW M stripes. The illuminated M badge below the front head restraints also has Kith lettering.

In addition to the standard equipment on offer the special edition model can also be ordered with a selection of other extras, like M Compound brakes, M forged wheels and M Carbon bucket seats, the M Carbon exterior package, BMW Laserlight and BMW Individual lights Shadowline are standard. Deliveries of the M4 Competition x KITH will begin in summer 2021.





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New Direction

Having owned a string of Japanese cars, Kieran McCabe bought his first BMW in 2017 opening his eyes to a whole new world. Today he drives this stunning mildly modified 200,000-mile E30 325i Sport... Words: Simon Jackson Photography: Jason Dodd



The lure of owning a classic or modern classic BMW is pretty hard to resist. In the past the 2002 was the default period BMW after which classic car enthusiasts lusted, but as time has rolled ever onwards the E21 and E30 have, in many respects, taken up its mantle in modern times. Those searching for a classic BMW that is both fun and affordable these days are often drawn to the E30 for it strikes a rather happy medium between classic and modern motoring – that has resulted in good examples of the most desirable models

rocketing in value. The E30 M3 might now be considered too expensive for the majority, but other versions of BMW's iconic period 3 Series remain largely affordable. If you can't have an E30 M3 then the 325i is, for many, the next best thing. But, what's the reality of buying, owning and driving one today? Kieran McCabe, the owner of the E30 325i Sport you see here stepped forward to share his ownership experience with us so that we could find out...

"I've had quite a long history of Japanese performance cars," Kieran explained. "I started with a Honda Civic EK, then a Toyota Starlet

Turbo, next I progressed on to a couple of Mitsubishi Evos, Mazda RX-7, Nissan 350Z and I currently own a Nissan R35 GTR."

In 2017 something changed in Kieran's mind. He'd recently blown-up his second Mitsubishi Evo – and, in hindsight, ponders whether a yearning for that famous Germanic reliability was the cause – but either way a 2007 BMW Z4 M Coupé caught his eye and was purchased. The BMW bug had bitten.

"I loved the Z4 M," he smiles. "I was looking for quite a while, when I saw my car I put a £1k deposit on it just to secure a viewing – I



was not disappointed when I saw it. I bought a set of Satin Grey 19-inch wheels, fitted a Remus exhaust and wrapped the car in 3M Perfect Satin Blue – it looked incredible.”

At this point we should probably highlight that Kieran owns a successful vehicle graphics and wrapping business – RGVA in Kent (www.rgva.co.uk), so the 35-year old is pretty handy when it comes to personalising a car in certain ways. The Z4 M stayed in Kieran's stable for two years until the lure of the aforementioned Nissan GTR was too much to bear and a good offer for the BMW arrived in his lap. The Zed, however, would not be Kieran's last BMW – evidence of which you can see in these very pages.

“I've always liked the look of the E30

but I think what solidified the thought of owning one in my mind was walking back to an underground station in London after a meeting,” he recalls. “I saw a showroom condition, blacked-out, Tech1 Convertible on the nicest custom BBS RS wheels I've ever seen. It drove past me and I stopped in my tracks. As soon as I got on the train I began my search...”

Initially Kieran wasn't sure what he was looking for, keeping an open mind in terms of model and specification.

“I toyed with the idea of buying a base model E30 M10B18 and performing an engine swap with a M54B30 – just for a bit of fun and to occasionally throw around a track. My friend, Mark Dady, used to own an

E30 Convertible about 10-years ago and he called me, initially, I think, to talk me out of buying one all together! Knowing that I'd never owned or even driven a car as old as the E30, he started the conversation with 'Why do you want to buy an old BMW that'll be slow and handle terribly?'"

Mark's little 'pep talk' made no difference, for Kieran the look of the E30 was what really mattered most, and once it became apparent that he wasn't for turning – and that this was no short-lived phase – his friend Mark began taking him seriously and offering some very helpful advice.

“Mark decided to help guide me in the right direction rather than sit back and watch me make an impulse purchase of some

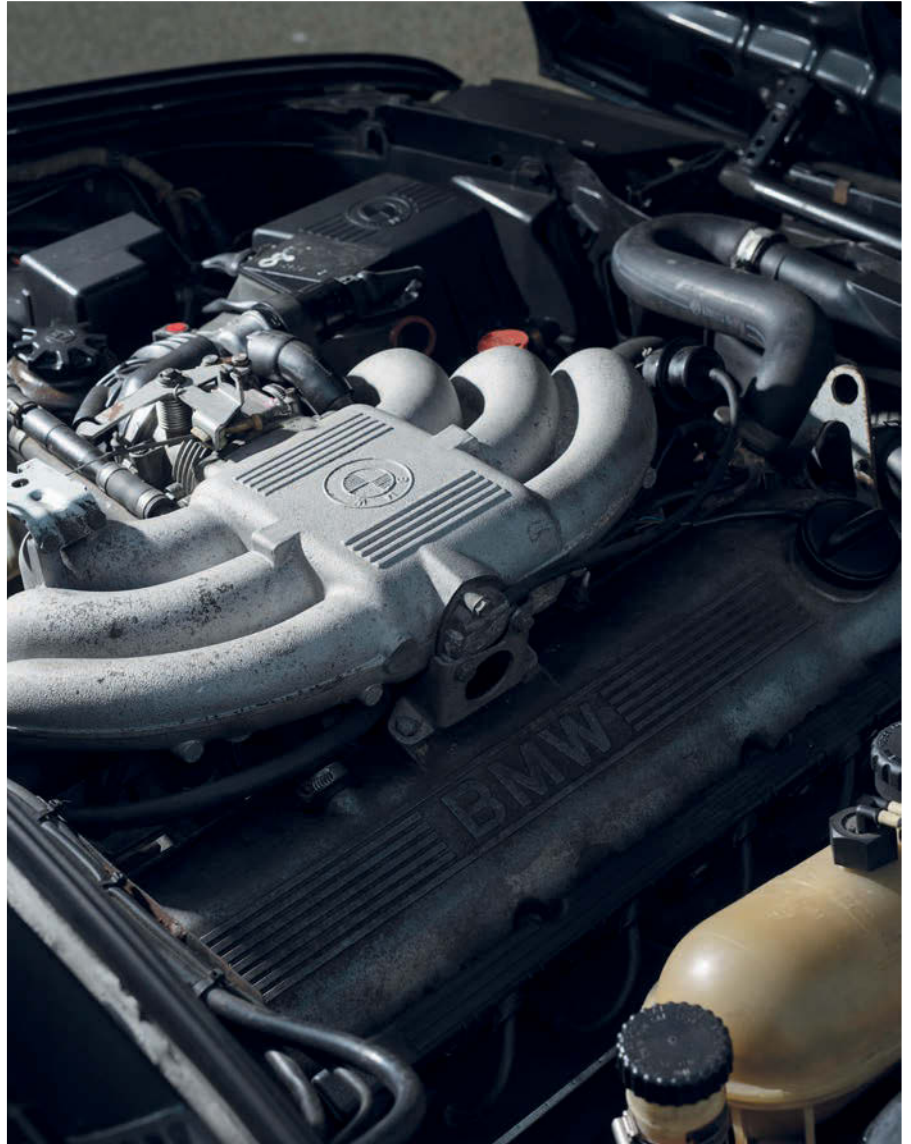
“It drove past me and I stopped in my tracks. As soon as I got on the train I began my search...”





'Frankenstein' E30 with parts from every 3 Series of the 1980s and 1990s! He made a few phone calls and within a couple of hours managed to track down a Schwartz Black 325i Sport coupé with a genuine Mtech1 kit. At the time there was only one other 325i Sport coupé for sale and it was an unfinished restoration project that hadn't even been painted – the seller was asking for 50 percent more money. Okay, this car was a bit leggy with 198,000-miles on the clock, but you would never think that to look at it. It was professionally converted from an automatic to a manual gearbox back in the mid-nineties."

The car was in good condition and Kieran knew within the first five-minutes of



E30 325i Sport

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION: Scorpion exhaust, ECU chip

CHASSIS: BC Coilovers, replica BBS RS alloy wheels, E36 'purple tag' steering rack conversion

EXTERIOR: Genuine Mtech1 kit, E30 M3 front splitter, tinted headlights and fogs lights, Satin Black front kidney grills, Black eyebrow spoiler, clear front and side repeaters



seeing it that he was going to buy it.

"My number one priority was to check the condition of the bodywork, interior and chassis – I knew that I would most likely upgrade a number of parts on the car so I wasn't too concerned that the exhaust was a little rusty, one of the original shocks seemed to be leaking and the tappets were quite noisy on tick-over. The car was completely stock – including the original BBS wheels that looked almost brand new," we're told. "The half dog-tooth pattern cloth and half leather interior was in surprisingly good condition. Unfortunately I did miss a patch of rust behind the nearside front wheel where stones and general road grit had worn away the inner arch, so I had that area repaired by Matt Oliver of SteerAlign in Maidstone."

The first modification that Kieran carried out on the car was to upgrade the suspension to H&R Cup shocks and springs – this transformed the handling instantly, especially given that the tired original stock suspension had seen better days. The H&R setup was later

updated to a set of BC coilovers which further improved the handling side of things, and, happily, also transformed the appearance of the car as it now sat far lower to the ground – much more to Kieran's liking.

"The only reliability issue I had was the car's coolant temperature sensor – it packed up which took a while to diagnose. I changed the MAF sensor, idle control valve and throttle position sensor before finding that it was the coolant temperature sensor at fault," Kieran happily recalled.

Importantly for someone new to the world of classic BMWs Kieran has found the local network of independent specialists available to him, and those offering upgrades, of truly great support.

"Matt at SteerAlign has carried out most of the modifications to the car, including the suspension and the steering rack install that has been undertaken – I had the popular steering rack upgrade carried out from stock to an E36 purple tag rack which was another great improvement. H&C Motors are a BMW

specialist near me in the centre of Maidstone. I chatted with the owner of the garage owner for over an hour when I collected the car after it had carried out a major service for me – including changing the cambelt. He was a fellow E30 owner, amongst owning several other classic BMWs".

So, having come from a string of Japanese performance cars, how, we wonder, does Kieran feel about BMW E30 ownership?

"I love the boxy shape of the Tech1, I personally prefer it to the Tech2 kit. The ducktail rear spoiler suits the car perfectly, and the three grooves and surround at the bottom of the car just look so '80s. Even when the car was on its stock suspension set up it still handled better than I expected, but now that it's on the BC coilovers the handling is amazing," he explained.

Since taking ownership of the car, Kieran has only been able to attend one official E30 specific car meet for like minded souls, held at Car Audio Security in London where he reports a brilliant turnout with some amazing



“On its stock suspension it handled better than I expected, but on the BC coilovers the handling is amazing”





cars – a varied range of E30s all with their own unique style. It would seem that he's gelled nicely with classic BMW ownership.

"I would compare the experience of driving cars like these more to driving my GTR, but the E30 is something entirely different. Driving the E30 feels like you're in some kind of time capsule. I don't really feel the need to drive fast, even though it does have a decent amount of poke, I prefer to just cruise and enjoy seeing people smile when they see it.

"The reaction to the E30 is honestly like nothing I've experienced with any other car I've driven, most of the cars I've owned in the past have always turned a few heads but the

E30 doesn't just turn heads – it makes people smile, too." he said. "I've had people stop me in traffic to talk to me about it, neighbours that I've never spoken to before stopping to ask me about it, kids saying "cool car" and ignoring the GTR – I've even had old ladies giving me the thumbs up! Almost everyone I speak to about the car remembers someone who used to own one and they love reminiscing about times past."

And what does Kieran make of the way E30 values are climbing in recent times?

"I've no plans to ever sell the E30 – I just can't see me ever getting bored of it. I usually keep for cars for a maximum of two years

but I'm definitely in for the long haul with the E30 – it is the first car I've ever owned that I'm adamant I will never sell so the values are kind of irrelevant to me. Though, one negative effect for me personally is that it does mean secondhand parts are becoming more expensive to buy!"

We'll leave the final word on E30 325i ownership to Kieran: "The E30 M3 Evo is regarded as the mecca of all E30 models, but they certainly have a price tag to match. I think the E30 325i Sport is definitely up there with the higher specification models available of its time."

On that we can all agree. ●

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"The reaction to the E30 is like nothing I've experienced with any other car I've driven"



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Aces High

When it comes to wind-in-the-hair thrills with a V8 soundtrack, Stephen Walters isn't afraid to show his hand... Words: Dan Bevis Photography: Jason Dodd

The game of poker, to those who understand it, is the great leveller. Sure, on paper it sounds pretty dry – a card game firmly grounded in probability, in which the winner is determined by the combinations and ranks of the cards they hold... oh, but it's so much more than that. Characterised by the inevitable betting which accompanies it, poker is best played in dark, smoky rooms by a cast of characters that counts among its number a shifty guy with an eye patch, a high-rolling Texan in a linen suit and Stetson, an East End wideboy, a jilted bride, and a variety of roustabouts who have nothing to lose but their rolls of twenties. It's as much about reading one another's tells and outmanoeuvring your opponents in a cerebral arena of conflict as it



is about which actual cards you're dealt.

So what would happen if you were to apply this brutal, no-compromise, no-quarter approach to the act of speccing a sports car? This is very much the method employed by BMW when it came up with the idea of the Edition 500 variant of the E9x M3. By the time this limited-run car appeared on the market, this generation of M3 was nearing the end of its life-cycle, having been in the showrooms for six years. With the next-generation F80 family hovering on the horizon, the Edition 500 was an enticement to buyers; a reminder that the current model was still very much a vibrant, visceral and vivacious proposition. BMW added a grand to the sticker price, then threw about four-grand's worth of options at the car, the poker face firmly in situ. As the name suggests,

just 500 were built. They were available in Mineral White or Santorini Blue, but such an act of pantone sobriety isn't what raises pulses in late-night card game pits; no, the real money shot was the Imola Red option, as we see colourfully splashed across these pages. The hellraiser's colourway, juxtaposing red and black with artful malevolence. Just 78 buyers opted to take delivery of their Edition 500 in this colour, and only 31 were E93-designated drop-tops. The odds of seeing one these days? Well, you'd better cock an eyebrow at the dealer and throw your chips on the table...

THE ACE OF CLUBS

Of the four principal ingredients that make up this car's character, this is the sensible suit. The club is the only symbol of the four that could

actually be usefully employed as a tool. (Oh wait, no, the spade is a better tool, isn't it? But we've got something more interesting reserved for that, you'll see.) It's also the name of a DC Comics supervillain, which implies that the club is inherently underwritten by a streak of cold, calculating logic.

Logic is very much the modus operandi of this car's owner, Stephen Walters. It was company cars which drove him into serial BMW ownership, and the passion has grown in an evolutionary deviation from pure on-paper sensibleness. "I started with a company E36 318i when I worked at Pearl Assurance; they ordered 2,500 in one go and BMW did a few extras," he recalls. "After that I had an E46 323i – again, a company car. When I left there and set up my own company, I had a 330i



convertible in black followed by a then-new E46 325i coupe in silver, which I ran for a couple of years. Next came an E46 M3 in silver with red leather and SMG – and what a great car that was! It made a really lovely sound when I was enjoying the performance potential..."

Ok, as we begin to stray from the concept of the strictly sensible, let's see how the romantic flushes of lipstick red come into play.

THE ACE OF HEARTS

It doesn't take a psychologist to deduce that the ace of hearts is the more emotional of the quartet. Led by want and wanton desire, it creates feelings of yearning, squalls of passion, and it's frequently allowed to rule the head. It's also a song by Chris Rea, but we can probably skip over that for now. And so the logical run

of car ownership began to find itself adorned with little lovebites here and there, the E46 being followed by an E93 M3. "My business partner and I had the first two M3s from the dealer in Silverstone," says Stephen. "It looked great, and with the folding metal roof it was an awesome package. That was quickly followed by a V8 M5 in blue, which was an outstanding car with an amazing engine sound." Stephen's affections hopped from Bavaria to Stuttgart at this point, ticking the Porsche 911 box as that'd always been the childhood dream; along the way there have also been more than a few X5s, from a 3.0i to the current X5 M. Passion over logic? For sure, we can see how the ace of hearts is eager to trump the clubs. So let us investigate what the other red card has to offer.





THE ACE OF DIAMONDS

Diamonds, as the old saying goes, are a girl's best friend. They're also formed by the application of astonishing force and heat upon carbon-laden minerals – which, if you replace minerals with organisms, means that diamonds are basically the same as petrol. Sort of. And our modern obsession with machines powered by such fuel has led to a wide variety of trends and scenes – you know this, that's why you're reading *BMW Car* rather than *Knitting Realm* – and it's the red mist of mischief that led to the acquisition of Stephen's current E93 M3 Edition 500. "I really missed the V8 convertible, so I decided to find another," he reasons. "I felt that the newer M3s were a bit frantic – if you've driven them, you'll know what I mean – but the E93 was

the perfect formula. It had to be something special too, and I knew that the Edition 500 had a great spec. So I asked a dealer contact to find me one in Imola Red."

This, as we now know, was something of a tall order. The spec is indeed impressive, with the Edition 500 boasting model-specific black leather and Piano Black trim, and a laser-cut plaque reminding you of its specialness. But a red one? That's a rare groove of an already rare entity.

"My contact said he'd never seen one," Stephen laughs. "He'd only seen blue or white ones. So I started hunting around, and eventually found this example at a dealer's in Sheffield, John Holland Cars. It needed the wheels refurbishing and the front end repainting, but we struck a deal and the work was carried

"I felt that the newer M3s were a bit frantic – but the E93 was the perfect formula"





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EXTERIOR: Imola Red, shadowline trim, dark chrome tailpipes

INTERIOR: Edition 500 black Novillo leather with contrast stitching, Piano Black trim, limited edition dash emblem, colour-coded mats





out locally by Chris Riches Ltd. It was then collected by Ashford BMW, who went through the whole car for me, and it was while it was with them that I learned there were only 31 of these built in this colour." This gives some significance to the '31' on the cherished number plate. And with the car tip-top and ready to fulfil some passionate dreams, it's time for the final suit to reveal itself.

THE ACE OF SPADES

Admit it, you read 'The Ace of Spades' in a Motörhead voice, didn't you? Impossible not to. And that's entirely correct, for the ace of spades is the malevolent card, the simmering yin to the heart's cheery yang. This is the ace that led Stephen to dip a toe into the waters of naughtiness, an unsuspecting riptide of evil pulling him in deep. "One of my mates described the car's appearance by saying 'It looks like it's turned up for a fight'," he grins,

and it's hard to better that description. The vicious juxtaposition of blood red and inky black is pure boxing ring, the type of ring you find poker tables positioned within in dystopian gangster fantasies. "I just love the way the M3 sounds with the roof down," says Stephen. "It always puts a smile on my face, and being a very limited-run car makes it all the more special. And while I've owned a lot of cars over the years, I'll be keeping this one – after all, there'll never be another M3 with a V8 in it." That's the crux of the matter, really. You never know what's ultimately going to turn your head, but fate's in the cards and is more than happy to make the decisions for you. Very little of poker is luck.

"I just love the way the M3 sounds with the roof down. It always puts a smile on my face"

Now, a pedant might argue that the highest-ranking hand in the game is a straight flush – five consecutive cards in the same suit. But where's the artistry in that? There are forty possible combinations of straight flush, whereas holding four aces is something only

one person can do. It's that winning fusion of craft and uniqueness that makes the E93 M3

Edition 500 so compelling – it's a wildcard, a maverick, a jarring blend of some quite distinct and separate wants and ideals, fused together into a glorious whole. Stephen's lengthy automotive journey has led him to a timeless modern classic with a wonderfully diverse mix of emotive touch points. And with a hand like that, he's got no reason to bluff ●



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BOB HARPER

Bob meanders around the subject of motorsport...



BMW took its 20th Nürburgring 24 Hour race win recently

I was absolutely delighted to see BMW win the latest Nürburgring 24 Hour race a few weeks back, although it was certainly a very odd looking race without a quarter of a million fans lining the track. No camp fires, no fireworks shooting across the track, no scrumptious smelling sausages slowly charring on the grill and no Weissbier being quaffed by the barrel load. And not even 24-hours of racing as the event was stopped for the best part of ten hours thanks to torrential rain.

None of that will have mattered one jot to BMW though who finally bagged its 20th win overall on the 50th anniversary of the race's first running – which was won by a BMW with the great Hans Stuck at the wheel. BMW has been stuck on 19 wins since its last overall victory with the E92 M3 GT2 in 2010 and truth be told it didn't really look like the BMW M6s were going to be in the hunt this year as the big coupés struggled early on until the race was stopped. The leading Mercs crashed in the rain, the Audi challengers had accidents, pit stop penalties or wrong tyre choices and the Rowe racing M6 GT3 was able to run a faultless race to emerge victorious in the end.

It's quite an achievement to have won 20 times in this most unforgiving of races but it does seem a little odd that the M6 GT3 is still BMW's weapon of choice for the event. It's as if there's some sort of silent acknowledgement that the latest M8 racer isn't up to the job. Surely half the point of racing is the old 'Win on Sunday, sell on Monday' adage so to win a race in a car that hasn't been on sale for a couple of years is a bit odd.

And looking to the future I can't help but wonder what's going to

happen to motor racing. Increasingly new car production is heading towards hybrid and electric and series such as the BTCC are trying to get on board with this with new rules for the 2022 season that will include a Cosworth designed battery, electric motor and cooling system. It'll be the same for every team much like the current NGTC rules in BTCC where major components such as turbos, intercoolers, ECUs, gearboxes, diffs, suspension, brakes and steering are common to all cars.

While I understand the reasons behind this – to allow smaller teams to compete on a more level playing field with the manufacturer-backed entries – there must come a point where companies such as BMW and Honda don't see the point of entering as there simply isn't enough BMW or Honda in the car. It's almost getting to the point where it's a silhouette racing series. Do the fans care? I don't know, but I guess so long as the racing is close and competitive fans will continue to watch but I doubt they'll be heading off to the showrooms on Monday morning to put in an order for a 330i M Sport or a Civic Type R.

Perhaps we should just enjoy motor racing while we can as I'm guessing it won't be long before the vast majority of it will be purely battery powered – the racing can still be close but without the sound it feels pretty soulless to me. At least BMW is still committed to endurance races like the Nürburgring 24 Hours and has revealed its next GT car to take over from the M8, the M4 GT3. At last those grilles make sense... the horrendous front-end will simply scare other drivers out of its path when they glimpse it in their mirrors. Clever, very clever ●



JOHN GLYNN

John looks at new car sales numbers and how the pandemic has affected things...



A few months ago, I wrote a column pondering how societal attitude shifts caused by the COVID pandemic would be reflected in consumer activity after the first lockdown. Would the changes we were seeing in attitudes to clean air, pollution, globalisation and quality of life in general be reflected in consumer behaviour through the remainder of 2020?

The latest new vehicle registration data gives us an indication of the state of play up to the end of September 2020. Figures released by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) show that, despite a fall of less than five percent in year-on-year registrations during September 2020, year-to-date new car registrations are down some 33 percent. It is not hard to spot the losers.

New diesel car registrations are down 56 percent over the year to date: 270,000 fewer diesel cars have been registered so far in 2020, with a total market share of 17 percent. Petrol car registrations are down 40 percent: some 485,000 units year-on-year, giving petrol a market share just shy of 60 percent. The big change – and no surprise – is that 'alternative' – i.e. part or full electric – drivetrain vehicles are rising.

So far in 2020, 314,655 hybrid and plug-in electric vehicles have been registered. This means that alternative drivetrains now outsell diesel roughly three to two. The combined market share for part- and full-electric cars is now 25 percent.

Looking at new car registrations by brand shows the scale of the shift faced by some manufacturers. Of the forty manufacturers listed in the SMMT new car registration data, only four have seen a year-on-year fall in registrations of less than 20 percent. They are; Bentley (-17 percent), Lexus (-12 percent), Porsche (-13 percent) and Toyota (-16 percent).

Volumes are obviously significantly different between these brands. Year to date, Bentley has registered just over 1,000 cars, while Porsche is higher at 8,653. Lexus steps up a bit with 11,341 cars YTD, but Toyota has registered 73,067 units in the UK this year. To lose just 16 percent of sales this year versus last, while other manufacturers lose up to 50 percent year-on-year shows that Toyota has got something right.

A recent press release gives some clue as to how Toyota has managed it. Cumulative sales data for the hybrid models in Toyota's portfolio shows that sales of its hybrid models through 2020 are up on last year: 50,608 units this year compared to 48,359 unit in 2019. Toyota's global hybrid sales now top 15 million units, with the UK accounting for 356,000 hybrid sales in an EU total of 2.8 million cars (approx. 12.7 percent).

This number is a bit of a surprise, as the UK is a bigger market in

European terms, with a usual share of the EU and EFTA market circa 15 percent. One might surmise that the lower penetration of hybrid technology into UK car sales may be linked to company car taxation policy favouring diesel models, but it was a no-brainer for me to pick a Prius when I ordered my last company car some 12-years ago and that EV tax advantage has only increased since 2008. More likely is the UK's fascination with premium brands and the slow adoption of hybrid alternatives offered by premium (mostly German) manufacturers encouraging a general mistrust of hybrid drivetrains. As we see from the latest data, that perception is now changing rapidly.

Looking at the diesel figures, one might be encouraged to announce the death of diesel drivetrains. Some commentators have written on the subject. It didn't take a prophet to see that the Volkswagen emissions scandal would hurt diesel sales and that the numbers would fall. The dieselgate effect and the rise in support for EV drivetrains has helped to accelerate diesel's decline, but as the new sales of diesel vehicles continue to fall and the used car market faces lower supply of diesel cars, prices will be some way supported. The theory that (used) diesel purchase is financial suicide does not add up quite yet.

As more manufacturers discontinue their diesel programmes and electric vehicles begin to arrive on the used car market in more volume, the cost to change from diesel (or petrol) to electric will become more attractive. The inevitable day when new and used sales of part- and full-EV drivetrains outnumber combined sales of solely combustion-powered cars will be a real turning point. Those manufacturers who have not invested in shifting from new sales of diesel and petrol cars to the used EV forecourt stocks of tomorrow may soon find themselves with little to offer used car buyers, in terms of used EV stock.

At present annual mileage, my current daily driver – a diesel Honda Civic Tourer – will be up for a change at the end of 2023, so it is interesting to play the motorway game of 'what's my next used car?' I quite like the idea of a BMW i3, which, at present prices, might cost something like £20,000 for a 3-year-old, 20k-mile example with range extender and a decent spec at an independent dealer. A Honda Jazz IMA hybrid to similar criteria is currently close to half that from a Honda franchised dealer. There are some advantages to an i3 when one factors in brand and residual value, but twice the price from one to the other? I'm not sure that my inner used car buyer will be £10k keen to go with the roundel when the time comes to change. In the meantime, I'll keep playing the game ●



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BMW Car Christmas Gift Guide

Christmas is a time for giving, and at *BMW Car* we don't see why your car should be excluded from the festivities. With that in mind, this issue's New Products pages are dedicated to gift ideas for you and yours, and – of course – your car! Our hand-picked selection of products of different shapes, sizes and price points will all make ideal Christmas gifts.

S54B32 Cut Ring Head Gasket

How Much? £190.33

Where: enginepartssuk.net

High performance engines, such as those found in many BMWs, require robust engineering solutions and, as they age, that often calls for an aftermarket part designed for purpose. Enter Engine Parts UK, it has been supplying quality engine parts and components to the automotive industry over 30-years and offers a multitude of parts for a mix of BMW applications.

Of particular interest to us here is that Engine Parts UK can supply a Cut Ring Head Gasket for the BMW S54B32 engine – as found in the E46 M3, E36/7 M Roadster and E36/8 M Coupé, E85 Z4 M Roadster and E86 M Coupé. Fitting an uprated head gasket to your prized motor could be the best Christmas present you could give it.

The Athena Cut Ring gaskets are the perfect solution for the preservation of high performance engines, Athena has been in the market since 1973 and today it is a leader in the production of gaskets in Europe.

In this application the reinforced Cut Rings have a 87.5mm bore and 1.20mm thickness, a triple groove cutting surface and provide maximum sealing

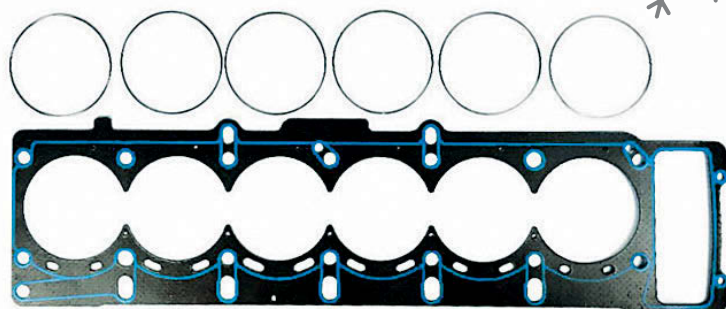
around the cylinder bore, the silicon-based beading on critical areas offers a tremendous seal. Installation is easy, simply fit the head gasket like a stock version then place the rings on the



block – there's no need for the machining of the cylinder block. The solution is said to be perfect for high performance applications where power exceeds 2 Bar of overboost.

The Engine Parts UK website goes into far greater detail than we have space to here, so pay it a visit (enginepartssuk.net) and then get in touch with the team to discuss your requirements on 01708 890494.

Don't forget to mention *BMW Car* magazine.



S62 V8 Clutch & Flywheel

How Much? £1,620.00

Where: atspeedracing.co.uk

Atspeed has announced it is now stocking the TTVR High Power Twin 215mm Competition Clutch and Flywheel for the BMW S62

V8 engine. This high power combination kit is suited to all sorts of competition applications from drifting to off-road racing. Unlike other competition clutches this one can be used with the factory release bearing mechanism making installation easy. The clutch can handle up to 900lb ft of torque with exceptional durability. It can be fully rebuilt with options to upgrade further if required.



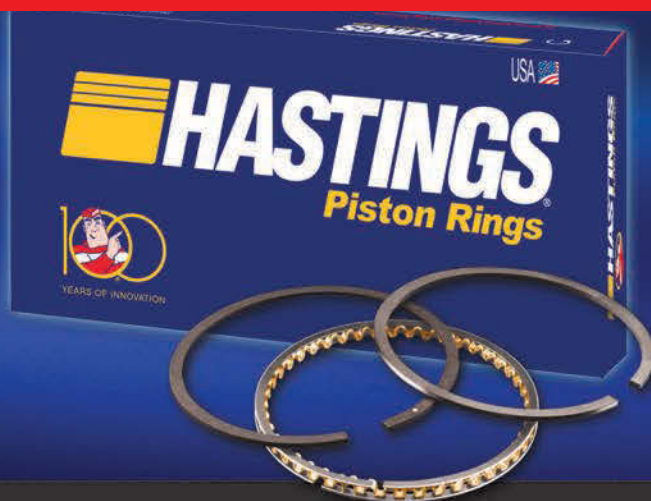
G30 / G31 Front Splitter

How Much? £129.00

Where: mstyle.co.uk

M-Style is now offering a Performance Front Splitter for the G30 / G31 BMW 5 Series. The splitter is finished in matt black and is available priced at just £129.00. The kit comes with a fitting kit but M-Style recommends professional fitting which it can carry out for just £40.00 (including VAT). For further details call 0208 598 9115.



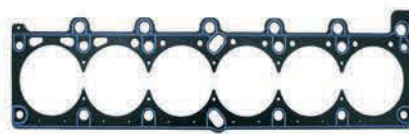


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BMW Car Christmas Gift Guide

Protector-4 Outdoor Car Cover

How Much? From £115.00

Where: morethanpolish.com

You wouldn't leave home without a coat, scarf and gloves in deepest winter so why leave your car out in the cold? As the name suggests More Than Polish offers more than just car care products and robust car covers are amongst its best-selling offerings – especially at this chilly time of year. There are a number of options available to owners of BMWs of all shapes and sizes, but what we like best about the Protector-4 Car Cover is its wealth of desirable features, range of sizing options and its affordable price.

The Protector-4 outdoor breathable cover is designed for those who wish to cover their car when it is parked outside (though it can also be used indoors), protecting it from dirt, bird lime, tree debris, weather and myriad other threats to your car paintwork. The Protector-4 features a durable heavy gauge four-layer fabric that is also breathable, this outdoor car cover has a soft, fleecy lining preventing scratches and marring caused by ill-fitting, coarse fabric car covers. Highly water

resistant, handily it can be draped over a wet car allowing it to breathe and dry naturally. Strong elasticated ends and an underbody strap keeps the cover in situ even in stronger winds, it also has reinforced eyelets for the fitting of a Cable Lock (available separately priced at £10.00). Seven different sizes are available ranging from 4.05-metres to 5.35-metres, catering for cars from small BMW sports cars such as the Z3, and hatchbacks like the 1 Series, to the largest luxury limousines – including the BMW 7 Series. Protector-4 covers have welded and double stitched seams for strength and water resistance. They are ideal for cabriolets as they allow any moisture retained in the fabric of the hood to breathe out, this prevents the creation of a warm, moist environment for green algae to grow.

Supplied in a special Protector-4 drawstring bag and guaranteed for 13-months, this is a truly beneficial gift for your car. Prices start at £115.00 rising to £130.00. Contact More Than Polish to establish the best size for your car on 01780 749449, and don't forget to mention *BMW Car* magazine.



New TAG Heuer Monaco

How Much? From £4,850

Where: tagheuer.com

Forget the Christmas presents for your car – this one could be for you or the special man in your life. The TAG Heuer Monaco is a timeless watch synonymous with 'King of Cool', Steve McQueen, now the story continues more than 50-years on since the watch was launched. These new 39mm models feature a powerful movement, the Calibre Heuer 02 – visible behind the watch's sapphire crystal caseback, it boasts an impressive power reserve of 80-hours. All three new watches draw inspiration from the iconic models of the 1970s – two are presented on a modernised metallic bracelet, recreated especially for them.

The highlight is the bold black dial with a sunray-brushed appearance. Its counterpart features a lustrous blue sunray-brushed dial with a red, white and blue colour scheme reminiscent of the original Monaco timepieces of 1969 (this version is available from January 2021). Both models are presented on a stainless-steel bracelet and feature striking square counters at 3 and 9 o'clock and a red central chronograph seconds hand. The model with the black dial is also available with a black leather strap.



BMW Scarf

How Much? £60.00

Where: shop.bmw.co.uk

This warm BMW Scarf is an ideal stocking filler, designed with a fashionable ribbed-look, it is rather elegant. It is made from high-quality wool and comes only in Dark Navy Blue, it features a Black BMW logo stud. Note down BMW Article Number: 80162454625.





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BMW Car Christmas Gift Guide

Gliptone Ultimate Gift Kit

How Much? £60.00

Where: gliptoneeurope.com

Gliptone car wax has been a New York tradition of quality since 1947. Sold locally, car enthusiasts came to understand that quality ingredients with quality processes equal the finest products. Gliptone's popularity grew by word of mouth. Satisfied customers were eager to pass on their secret to a durable finish with a deep, rich shine. Gliptone continues to keep true to its purpose, developing the ultimate quality products for today's paint finishes without sacrificing the quality started in 1947.

Today, the Gliptone offering consists of a full line of professional automotive reconditioning products, professional car wash chemistry and retail packaged car care products. This includes its famous Body Gloss, Wash N' Glow, original Carnuba paste and cream waxes, liquid metal polishes, quick detailers and its world-renowned Leather Cleaners, Conditioners and repair products.

Gliptone products are used by top detailers around the world. Its distributors and end-user customers have found its selection of products to be the highest quality and most useful in today's fast paced, results driven detailing industry.

Gliptone's Ultimate Gift Kit Contains is the ideal Christmas present, it contains; Ph Neutral Car Shampoo, Magtastik Wheel Cleaner, Emerald Clean all-purpose cleaner, Wax After Wash quick detailer, Polish for making your paintwork pop, a wash mitt and microfibre towels to make it the magic happen. The ultimate car lover's maintenance kit is usually priced at £92.00 but it is available now for

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E46 ESS Supercharger

How Much? 6,850.00

Where: mstyle.co.uk

Here's perhaps the ultimate Christmas present for E46 owners. M-Style is now offering the ESS tuning supercharger system for E46 3 Series cars with engine capacities ranging from 320i to 330i. Taking the 320i engine as an example, the system will increase power to 260hp and torque to 229lb ft torque – powering the car from 0-62 mph in 6.2-seconds.

The system includes; ESS-spec Lysholm 1.6l twin screw supercharger unit, high strength, dual-layer cast aluminum alloy ESS intake manifold with integrated high capacity, Laminova based liquid intercooling system, uni-belt SC drive system with additional OEM quality idler pulleys, six larger Bosch fuel injectors, throttle body style butterfly bypass system for superior fuel economy during cruising and optimal throttle response under all conditions, perfectly optimized, dyno tweaked MS43 ECU software, CNC hard anodized brackets and hardware, cast aluminium SC intake system with crankcase fume reduction system designed for boost, high temperature resistant, custom made silicone hoses with clamps, detailed, step-by-step installation manual, heavy-duty drive belt and all necessary installation hardware. Phew!

The system comes with a two-year unlimited mileage warranty and is available for E46 320i 2.2 2001-on, 325i, 328i and 330i. M-Style can also provide a fitting service at £770.73 (including VAT).



Air Zing Mini Air Purifier

How Much? £59.99

Where: osram.co.uk

Here's a sign of the times, Osram has used its extensive expertise in photonics and ultraviolet light to expand its product range, the Air Zing Mini air purifier removes germs from the air inside vehicles and improves air quality for occupants – eliminating up to 99.9 percent of viruses and bacteria.

In a closed, small area, like the interior of a vehicle, harmful germs can easily spread. The driver and passenger unknowingly bring them along on the journey, and then, the ventilation system distributes the pathogens throughout the car – a risk especially now with the current coronavirus pandemic.

The ultraviolet light of Osram's Air Zing Mini works at a wavelength of 360 to 370 nanometers and can remove viruses and bacteria from the vehicle's air. The device has already been successfully tested against bird flu viruses. The air purifier also eliminates airborne allergens, pollutants or smells. With a diameter of 7.5 cm, the compact, round device is no larger than an apple and easily attaches to a vehicle's ventilation slats with a clip.

Included are a USB cable for power. The device operates quietly and illuminates to show it is working. Its filter can be cleaned with clear tap water, dried and reused. It can also be used freestanding – making it ideal for office desks.



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You Write...



E61 545i / 550i

I read your October 'Wagon Wheels' article with great interest, having been the proud owner of an E34 530i V8, an E39 540i V8, and an E61 535d (a slight disappointment sadly). Your article does a great job plotting the history of these wonderful wagons, lamenting (as I do) the absence of M5 Touring models in the UK, apart from the glorious stand-out E61 version, of course.

But I need to correct you on one thing: BMW made an F11 550i N63TU Touring model in RHD form, for the UK market. There is, I believe, only one of its kind in the UK, first registered in 2014, and I am lucky enough to have it. There were saloon versions available at the

time, but the Touring was discontinued for the UK market, with only I being imported by BMW UK, from whom I bought it, with only 1000 miles on the clock. My lucky day, as I had been in the market for a new one just as it was withdrawn.

The car has an interesting back story and as you might imagine is stonking to drive. 450hp, 442lb ft torque, 0-62 in just over 4.5-seconds, quad sports exhaust etc etc. Docile when you want it and a beast when you don't.

Jonathan Mackey
via email

E9X Key

I have an E92 3 Series diesel which was supplied with one of the last set of ignition keys without the ability to replace the battery. How long does the key need to be in the car to fully recharge the battery at idle, or if out on a run? I know this is not a usual question but due to Covid-19 and the lack of use over the last several months I have been concerned.

Peter Fisk via email

According to our technical guru, Andrew Everett, the key will recharge in the key slot within half an hour. We hope that helps!



E3 Envy

I am so envious of Bob Harper. Perhaps I should explain, he has an E3 that's in very good condition. For many that would be enough but for me it should be used as a daily car. Over the first month niggles would surface but from then on it will be daily pleasure. Get a really good service done, wash and polish regularly, get an annual clear wax underseal done and drive it daily.

When I worked for BMW in the '70s I had them as demo cars. I drove down to the '77 Monaco Grand Prix in an Si, I had an Si of my own in the '80s. From then on they became too rusty or expensive to put right.

Now they're such a rarity you'd give pleasure to others, as well as yourself, just to be out on the road. Get rid of the modern cars, have two really good classics.

Nick Smith
via email



If you've got a point to make, a view to express or a burning, BMW-related bee in your bonnet, then we'd love to hear from you. Email us at: bmwcar.ed@kelsey.co.uk, contact us via social media or write to: BMW Car, Kelsey Publishing Ltd, The Granary, Downs Court, Yalding Hill, Yalding, Kent, ME18 6AL

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New dog, old tricks

Having turned out a range-topping F40 1 Series, BMW is eyeing up a slice of the broader hot hatch pie with the 128ti.

Words: Dave Humphreys Photography: BMW



In terms of high-performance coupés and saloons, it's fair to say that BMW has got decent form. But when it comes to sprinkling that performance magic on its smaller cars, namely the 1 Series, the company hasn't been as consistent. The original E87 might not go down as highly memorable from the purists' perspective, but the rear-wheel-drive layout did at least give it some entertainment value, mostly in the form of the 130i. Having the N52 engine shoehorned in under the bonnet and putting out 261hp (in the earlier versions) in the direction of the rear axle made for some giggles.

Then BMW got serious and gave us a

limited-run 1M Coupé based around the E82 Coupe and influenced by the 1 Series Coupé tii Concept from the 2007 Tokyo Motor Show. Remember those letters. Granted, it was more of an M car than a hot 1 Series, but it gave the smallest model series, never a very aesthetically pleasing car, some clout and desirability.

For the second generation (F20) 1 Series there was a softening of the style and a further differentiation of the hot version in the shape of the N55-powered M135i. That was in turn superseded by the M140i, which gained the B58 motor and saw output increase to 335hp. This car was better equipped to go up against its Teutonic rivals in the form of the Audi RS3

and Mercedes-AMG A45. It was the only one available with rear-wheel drive, too.

But, inevitably, the arrival of the current F40 coincided with the introduction of the FAAR platform developed for both front- and all-wheel-drive models, including those with electrification. In some eyes the 1 Series lost some kudos even though it did gain some positive attributes such as improved packaging and more interior space. We once more get an M135i, this time with xDrive to help distribute that 306hp to the tarmac. It's an exact match for the all-wheel-drive Mercedes-AMG A35 on power, and only 4hp down on the latest Audi S3. But with such close competition among



the more expensive and premium hot hatches, BMW is setting its sights on a greater share of the market further down the pecking order, with a new model that could be a real winner. Enter the BMW 128ti.

The 128ti has established players like the Ford Focus ST and Volkswagen Golf GTI in its crosshairs and after spending some time going through (and under) the car with its development team during a special pre-production drive event, it's clear that BMW is taking this project very seriously. Not everyone might recall the ti badge, standing for Turismo Internazionale, as it last appeared on a new model on the 323ti, although ti badges were

used on the 316 and 325 up until 2005.

Peter Langen is BMW's Senior Vice President of Driving Dynamics and, despite his quiet demeanour, he is deeply passionate about driving and the enjoyment that it can and should bring people. As he shows us around the 128ti pointing out the technical differences between it and the M135i xDrive, his enthusiasm is evident: "All of the current hot hatches are fast cars, but to play with physics is the name of the game. [With this car] we'd like to give a special message to our fans. Freude am fahren ['driving pleasure']," he says.

Visually, there aren't many differences between this new hot hatch and the more

potent M135i xDrive. Both cars share much of the same body kit and bumpers, though as part of BMW's ti treatment, some of the inserts that we typically see in Cerium Grey are finished in a bright red, matching the brake calipers and retro-looking ti logo ahead of the rear wheels. A black grille, optional black headlight inserts, door mirror caps and window surround give the car a distinctive appearance, too. If it's not quite your thing, it is possible to order a more discreet exterior, but BMW has done a good job at making this model stand out.

The nods to the ti badge continue inside where it is boldly embroidered into the centre armrest. Throughout the rest of the interior



BMW had specific types of drivers in mind when fine-tuning the handling of the car



there is contrast red stitching around the dashboard, door cards and through the Sensatec/cloth sport seats. Somewhat confusingly, you will still find small M logos throughout the interior and exterior of the car. Furthermore, buyers will be able to add a host of M Performance accessories to the car, such as carbon mirrors and a more aggressive looking aerodynamic diffuser.

But looks aside, what makes the 128ti a bit more special is how it's mechanically set up. It uses a version of the 2.0-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine that appears in the M135i, but with the 128ti the power output is lower, peaking at 265hp at 4,750rpm with a torque maximum of 295lb ft from 1,750rpm. It is only available with an eight-speed automatic gearbox, unfortunately, but drive is only sent to the front wheels, via a Torsen limited slip differential. The lack of a manual gearbox



128ti

ENGINE: turbocharged four-cylinder petrol, transversely mounted

CAPACITY: 1998cc

MAX POWER: 265hp at 4,750-6,500rpm

MAX TORQUE: 295lb ft at 1,750-4,500rpm

0-62MPH: 6.1-seconds

TOP SPEED: 155mph

ECONOMY: 44.1-46.3mpg (WLTP)

EMISSIONS: 139-148g/km (WLTP)

WEIGHT (EU): 1,520kg

PRICE (OTR): £34,120

The 128ti is aimed at drivers who value driving thrills



option may disappoint some, but BMW is confident that the vast majority of customers would prefer the auto anyway. Not having to homologate two versions and the fact that the auto is now more emissions-friendly makes it a clear winner from a production standpoint.

By ditching the all-wheel-drive transmission the weight decreases by 80kg, giving the 128ti a kerb weight of 1,520kg. Thanks in part to the fitment of the Torsen diff, the 128ti scampers quickly off the line and hits the 62mph mark from a standing start in 6.1-seconds. That's more or less on par for the segment, though more extreme hot hatches like the Honda Civic Type R and Hyundai i30 N are quicker. In reality, the BMW feels faster than the stopwatch result, and that's the more important thing.

In regular traffic situations the BMW performs well, with the engine remaining quiet enough so as to not become annoying. BMW does equip the car with a bespoke suspension setup that is

lower by 10mm, as is usually the case with M Sport suspension, but it utilises firmer springs than in the M135i xDrive, with a bespoke damper as well. Langen describes how BMW had specific types of drivers in mind when fine-tuning the handling of the car, optimised for fast flowing B-roads – BMW sees the UK as being the largest market for the 128ti.

Driving along the narrow and undulating roads away from the BMW M Test Centre at the Nürburgring in Germany, the 128ti is composed and the engine lays on plenty of torque through the lower and mid-level of its operating range. In the default Normal mode, the eight-speed auto shuffles through the ratios with minimal fuss while the steering is suitably weighted to hint that this isn't a run-of-the-mill 1 Series. As is the BMW way, there's a perfectly round steering wheel that is just on the chunky side. By dialling back some of the directness of the steering, BMW's engineers have made

it less twitchy on the nose and in combination with the suspension settings this results in a car that has a much more enjoyable sensation on turn on and through a corner.

Under harder acceleration the Torsen differential protects the steering from any negative influence as the power is laid down through the front axle. It has a 31 percent degree of lock in traction mode and the 128ti also benefits from a specifically tuned ARB to provide traction control speeds that are up to ten times faster. How that translates into driving is a lack of any need for hesitation when reapplying the throttle through a corner, and with no discernible electronic interference from the software it feels wonderfully natural.

That extends to the sound that bellows around the cabin, too. One of the criticisms previously levelled at the M135i was just how contrived the whole experience felt. Its all-wheel-drive system saps some of the





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engagement while the synthesised engine sound that's piped into the cabin sounds more like a computer game at times than an actual combustion engine at work. Now, there is still some artificial sound at work inside the 128ti, but it's far more palatable.

Pressing on harder is when you again to appreciate the slick rapid-fire shifting of the eight-speed automatic. With the sportiest mode engaged it delivers each upshift perfectly, even in the upper reaches of the engine's rev range. The sound and healthy spread of power removes any desire to short shift through the gearbox, and a flat-out run on a section of unlimited autobahn enabled the 128ti to showcase exactly how planted and steady it holds at far higher speeds than most will ever experience on the road.

If you prefer to get your kicks on the track, then you're in for a treat, as a few laps of the Nürburgring Nordschleife prove that this is a

car that's well able to tackle the more senior aspects of driving. Not only did our time on track suggest that the 155mph top speed limiter is relaxed, but it gave the car's honed chassis an opportunity to shine. Barrelling down the seemingly endless Döttinger Höhe straight, the car feels surefooted and stable, but when you need to scrub off the speed the BMW's four-piston aluminium monobloc calipers take massive bites from the 306mm discs up front without upsetting the car's line as you tee-up the next apex. The consistency of the balance as the car rotates around the apex is something that keener drivers will savour, as they will the grip levels. As a no-cost option buyers will be able to specify that the 18-inch alloy wheels come shod with sticky Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tyres from the factory.

It would be easy to see the 128ti as little more than a gap-filler in the range, but it's far more than that. BMW didn't take the decision

to use the ti name lightly. Langen and his team knew that this car had to be something special – and it is. They also realise that it's a car that not everyone is going to 'get'; it's one for the people who love driving for the sheer pleasure of it, those who take the long way home and appreciate the reward from having to put effort in first. It's all too easy to drive something like the M135i xDrive fast, but the 128ti is the more enjoyable and engaging. A genuine hot hatch. The fact that it's going to undercut the range-topping all-wheel-drive variant by a substantial amount adds further fuel to the fire of desire this car will ignite among BMW enthusiasts.

The 128ti marks a true return to form for BMW, and it feels as if there is a small element within the company that is determined to rediscover and recreate what BMW's performance cars are meant to be about. The arrival of the 128ti and what it offers couldn't have come at a better time ●





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Tour de Force

In its standard form the F31 340i Touring is great all-rounder but with a Birds conversion it's elevated to a truly great one.

Words: Bob Harper Photography: Malcolm Griffiths

I'd hate to be forced to sit down and calculate how many hours I've lost during my life to working out what car I should buy next, or what my lottery win garage would look like. Suffice to say that it's a lot, especially as I end up constantly changing the goal posts with the criteria for my ideal wheels. Being vaguely practical and not having space for a vast array of cars means that I'm

constantly searching for the Holy Grail, that one car fits all unicorn.

These days the children are starting to fly the nest and while I do have a feeling that I'm going to have to play the cuckoo with some of them the fact of the matter is that I no longer need a huge car. The arrival of the dog means I'm not quite ready for a two-seater yet, but one of the smaller Tourings would

certainly fit the bill. I've always been drawn to BMW's estates, not only for their practicality but for their dashing good looks, too. To my mind they've always looked better than the saloons, coupés and convertibles with brilliant proportions and enough sporting cues to move them away from the load-lugging workhorse connotations.

And there's no doubting that the F31 340i



Touring we have here is a perfect example of the breed. From its aggressive M Sport front bumper to its scalloped sides with a strong swage line it looks like it should be travelling at speed even when it's standing still and in range-topping guise it's got the firepower to back up its looks. The B58 3.0-litre straight-six that arrived with the facelift 3 Series is an absolute cracker straight out of the box with 326hp and 332lb ft of torque so it's no slouch, recording a 5.1-second 0-62mph time.

Despite its impressive stats and the sort of acceleration figures that would have the last generation M3 owner closely monitoring their mirrors the 340i Touring isn't quite the finished article. It's definitely impressive up until the point where you start to properly hustle it along at which point it becomes somewhat wayward in its responses. In part this is due to

the run-flat tyres with which it is shod from the factory but it's mainly thanks to a suspension set up which appears to have been skimped on by BMW. Hit a typical British backroad and the tyres struggle to remain in contact with the Tarmac and you find your confidence in the car dwindling as the electronics are increasingly encouraged to intervene. Even on the motorway at high speed, dips and crests can unsettle it and you're left with the impression of a car that's close to being a great one but which ultimately falls disappointingly a little short of satisfying the keen driver.

Despite knowing this before he bought it the owner of this 340i Touring, Kos Loizou, spent quite a while sourcing this particular example: "It took me ages to find the 340i, they're pretty rare in the first place but there were certain options I wanted such as the

panoramic roof and a heated steering wheel," Kos tells us.

Kos is a serial Touring owner – he's even got his name down for the new M3 Touring – and previously owned an E91 335i manual Touring and the F31 340i was obviously the logical progression. Like the 340i the 335i wasn't perfect straight out of the box but having had the 335i breathed on by Birds to good effect he was pretty keen on having the same transformative conversion carried out on the 340i.

Birds, of course, has a long and well founded reputation for fettling BMWs and specialises in releasing the hidden potential in a variety of models. While M cars are seen as the pinnacle of the range by many BMW aficionados Birds accepts that they're not for everyone – they're expensive to buy, expensive

Birds has focused on developing a suspension set up that provides the best combination of ride, handling and traction

to run and maintain and in some cases owners can find them a little bit too hardcore for everyday use. So instead of focussing on the M cars Birds has concentrated on getting the best from the next rung down the ladder, cars such as the M140i, M240i and the six-cylinder 3 Series cars, machinery which on paper tick all the right boxes but which can ultimately disappoint the keen driver.

Birds has focused its efforts on developing a suspension set up that provides the driver with the best possible combination of ride, handling and traction attributes for fast and safe road driving, without sacrificing the practicality of standard BMW ownership. At the heart of Birds conversion is its B-Series Sports Suspension which consists of bespoke Eibach springs and Bilstein dampers both developed to Birds' own specification. In order to fully reap the rewards of the B-Series suspension Birds also recommends the installation of a Quaife ATB limited-slip differential which works in harmony with the suspension to maximise traction, especially in slippery and bumpy conditions. Last on the list of essentials is ditching the run-flats which just aren't up

to the job of providing the grip or handling fluency Birds is after.

While Birds don't see it as essential it also offers a performance upgrade for the turbocharged straight-six, both the N55 and its B58 successor fitted to the 340i we have here, and this increases power to 430hp and boosts torque by over 60lb ft with a consequential gain in performance. While it's possible to massage more power from the turbocharged 'six the ultimate goal for Birds was factory-style drivability as Kevin Bird explains:

"The B58 really is a nice engine and although you probably don't need the extra power and performance over the '35i' version. The specialist we tasked with developing the software spent six weeks tweaking the engine management to make it right on the road and it was only then that they put it on a dyno to tell us what we'd got. It was all about drivability – I deliberately gave them a car without our suspension set up and without a limited-slip diff which has made them pull back on the power delivery in the first few gears otherwise it'll just lose grip the whole time as there's so much torque. So it's a very conservative tune but it

feels like BMW Plus – it's not edgy or difficult or aggressive or anything like that so you can find the limit of grip quite easily without it overwhelming the rear end of the car."

The proof will be in the driving and as I ease the 340i Touring away from Birds' HQ there's no hint in the power delivery that this is anything other than a standard machine. Pottering along semi-urban roads the suspension does perhaps feel a little firmer than the comfort setting in a car with the variable dampers and the occasional road imperfection does permeate into the cabin, but it's in no way what you would call harsh or uncomfortable. A cruise up the motorway to our photo location proves the Touring is more than comfortable at speed and the way it soaks up bumps and crests is impressive, immediately settling every time it deals with a surface imperfection.

But it's on the back roads that it really impresses. Through high-speed sweepers it feels utterly planted even if the road surface is typically lumpy British Tarmac and you have the confidence to push much harder than in the standard car. The traction control light





Birds 340i Touring

ENGINE: B58 straight-six, turbocharged

CAPACITY: 2998cc

MAX POWER: 430hp

MAX TORQUE: 402lb ft

0-62MPH: 4.8-seconds (estimated)

TOP SPEED: 155mph

MODIFICATIONS: Birds B-Series suspension set up with bespoke Eibach springs and Bilstein dampers
Quaife ATB limited-slip differential
Birds engine management software.
Conversion cost: £6052.80

stays resolutely unilluminated as the tyres stay in contact with the road so much better than before. Intrinsically the Touring is a very well-balanced machine and it now has the poise to exploit that with the rear tyres digging in far better than before and seemingly unruffled by mid-corner undulations and bumps.

The Touring might sit a little lower – Kevin says it's around 10mm lower at the front and about 15mm at the rear – but he was very

keen to retain as much suspension travel as possible in order for it to cope with UK roads. For the Touring models the springs are a little longer and stiffer than for the saloon or coupé to take into account the heavier loads it might carry. In tighter corners the Birds set up is a revelation with a feeling of precision about the steering that really gives you the confidence to place the car accurately and you can feed the power in earlier thanks to the torque being

shuffled to the wheel with most grip so you can really slingshot out of the bend.

Overall there's a real fluidity to the car's movement and whatever you do it doesn't feel like you're going to catch it out. As a driver's car that you can exploit its potential as well as hone your skills it really is superb. The additional performance is very welcome but is by no means essential given the 340i's pace in standard form, but if you want to keep up





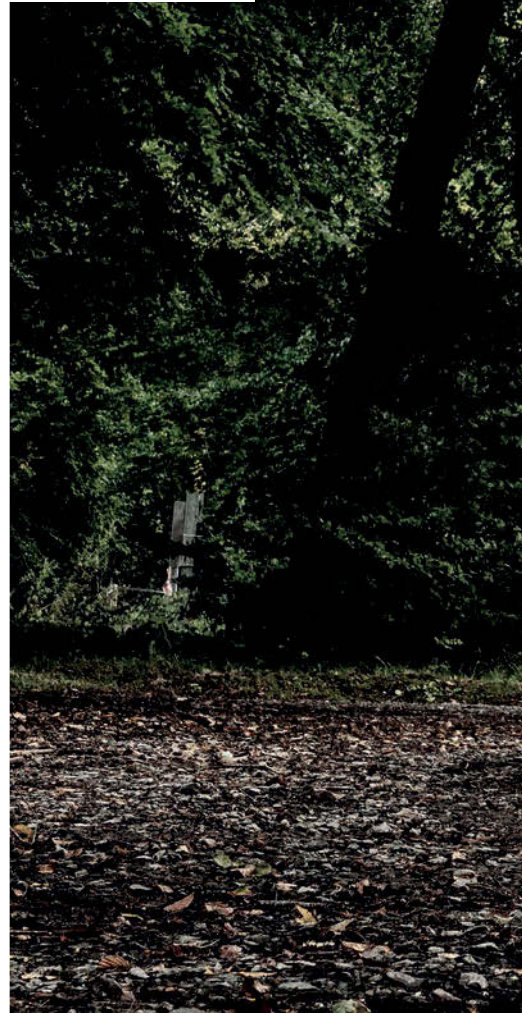
In tighter corners the Birds set up is a revelation with a feeling of precision about the steering that really gives you confidence





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with your mates in M cars then this 340i will certainly do it – it feels ballistically quick.

Kos is understandably absolutely delighted with the conversion and gave us his thoughts on the upgrades; "It reminds me of the way that Alpina sets up its cars – it drives a lot better, you have more confidence in the car. High speed stability, high speed bends – get it onto the backroads and you can have a lot of fun in it. At three figure speeds on the Autobahn it felt a little bit nervous in its standard form – if the road surface changed or if there was a dip or a bump it felt a little bit nervous at times and I didn't really like that. The Birds conversion totally eliminates that with the new springs and dampers doing exactly what they should," Kos tells us.

Within a couple of weeks of buying his

“The Birds tune is at the perfect level – plenty of performance but no drivability or reliability concerns”



Touring Kos removed the run flats and fitted a set of Michelin Pilot Sport 4s and while they gave a definite improvement it's the work that Birds carried out that really transformed the car. "Its high speed stability is excellent," he says, "It feels more stable, more planted and having the diff at the back means you can use the power without the electronics kicking in and disrupting things, even now with greasy roads and over 400hp on tap you can use the power without overwhelming the traction. The Birds tune is at the perfect level – plenty of performance but no drivability or reliability concerns at all."

And the icing on the cake as far as Kos is concerned is the everyday usability of the car. "I can put my mum in it and she's more than happy with the ride comfort – you can drive

it very normally and I could lend it to most people and they probably wouldn't have a clue that it's been tuned. It drives normally until you want to drive enthusiastically and that's when it really lives up to expectations."

I'm inclined to agree with Kos as his 340i Touring really does seem to be a Jack and master of all trades. Perfectly usable everyday without any significant compromises yet when the mood takes you it really is a very rewarding back road machine. Quality conversions like this don't come cheap, but they're perhaps not as expensive as you might think. For the complete conversion we have here (430hp, B-Series suspension and Quaife LSD) you'd be looking at just over £6000 (including parts, labour and VAT) and that includes a warranty on the engine work, too. If the

additional power isn't wanted or needed then the Dynamics Package (suspension and diff) come in at £3534, again that's a fitted price including VAT. Given that good 340i Tourings start at around £25k you could have a brilliant all-rounder on your driveway for around £30k which looks like exceptional value when you consider a new G21 M340i Touring weighs in at over £50k.

This 340i Touring could well be my ideal one car fits all solution. Let's hope Kos falls head over heels for the new M3 Touring and I might just make him an offer he can't refuse ●

CONTACT

Birds

Web: birdsauto.com

Tel: 01753 657444

Birds

"M2 performance with newfound precision and control."

- EVO Magazine ★★★★★

"It's so much more composed with the springs and dampers combining beautifully to deal with everything that's thrown at them."

- BMWCar Magazine ★★★★★

"The result is a car damn near as quick and exciting as the M2 Competition and, whisper it, more balletic on the road."

- Autocar ★★★★★



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Forbidden Pleasure

Speculators may gasp in horror at the idea of sully the purity of a collector car such as the 1M, but as he tears across Europe in his tastefully modified example, James Fleming is having too much fun to care.

Words: Dan Bevis Photography: Jason Dodd

The greatest cars are inarguably the ones which transcend the brickbats of the media and the cognoscenti to rise to the top on merit. Cars which purists initially turn their noses up at, only for said purists to rapidly eat their words and wish they'd given a proper chance to something which immediately became ludicrously collectible thanks to it being astonishingly capable. The 1 Series M Coupe is such a car – something which was initially scorned by forum cynics for being a parts-bin special, for not having a bespoke engine 'like a proper M car should', and has subsequently proven itself to be one of the all-time greats.

You probably know it as the 1M, rather than its official name... which isn't 'M1', despite the logic that would carry such a

moniker. Why? Well, there's precedent here. BMW has form with supplying engines for some pretty spicy machinery – there's the McLaren F1, of course, and all those oddball Wiesmann roadsters and Morgans, and if you cut any modern Rolls-Royce in half you'll find Bavarian propellers spilling out of the wounds. And back in the late 1970s, BMW had a naughty little dalliance with Lamborghini... The story goes that the two companies entered into an agreement for the Sant'Agata firm to build a BMW-badged production race car plus its necessary homologation road models, but the deal was mired in disputes and BMW ended up building it themselves. It was named 'M1', and was the firm's first mid-engined production car, featuring an M88 motor, oh-so-seventies wedge styling and, for some

reason, two BMW badges on the back. Maybe they couldn't decide which side to stick it on.

Long story short, the point of all this is that the M1 name was taken. So when we fast-forward to 2004 and the advent of the fresh new 1 Series, there were presumably one or two scratched heads in the product planning meetings; many forms to fill out and pencils to sharpen and what-have-you, but by 2010 BMW was ready to announce a bona fide M-developed variant of the 1 Series, which would go by the name '1 Series M Coupé'. But obviously we all call it 1M because it's a lot less clunky.

What isn't in any way clunky is the stellar formula of the concept. The model was originally supposed to be limited to a global production run of 2,700 units, but





buyers seemed to quite like it so by the time production ended in 2012, a total of 6,309 had been sold. The principle was simple: take an E82 coupé shell and significantly widen the track; bulk out the wings to match, and shove on a set of wide 19" wheels. Then throw in a tweaked version of the proven

N54 twin-turbo motor, and bolt it to the only true transmission to appeal to the discerning petrolhead: a six-speed manual with an LSD out back. Paint it in a lurid shade and the package is really quite alluring. (Yes, you could spec a 1M in Sapphire Black or Alpine White, but that would be to do it a great disservice – Valencia Orange is precisely as bonkers as a car like this ought to be.)

The plan worked too, as the 1M has become a genuinely sought-after, aspirational model, its limited-run status – there were just 450 supplied to the UK market – meaning that as many are being bought for investment purposes as are out having their necks wrung

on road and track. Its £40k retail price made it expensive for a 1 Series, but really quite cheap compared to a Porsche Cayman S, which it could happily run rings around in the right hands.

335hp was pretty handy in a car that weighed just 1,495kg, allowing it to hit sixty in 4.8-seconds, and you got all sorts of fun toys like the MDM button (for the stability and traction systems) and the M button (for throttle response). Gamified, next-gen stuff.

Of the total allocation of 450, the figures show that there are 362 of these cars surviving in the UK. And the one you see here – AJF 1M, a late-2011 61-plate car – represents the spicier end of the ownership spectrum. This is not a car bought by a cynical investor to be mothballed in a static collection. This is a driver's car, bought to be driven. And that original 335hp, while entertaining, has been beefed-up to a meatier and markedly more hilarious 426hp, thanks to a variety of well-chosen upgrades. James Fleming is the

grinning enthusiast behind the wheel, and as he explains the background behind his decision to take the plunge with this car, it becomes increasingly obvious that his focus is clearly on driving rather than speculating. Indeed, the passion for anything interesting with an engine is deep-seated and irrepressible, stretching way back into his childhood.

"I've been around cars all my life," he explains. "My father ran a successful Citroën and Chrysler Jeep franchise for twenty-five years and I worked in the family business from a young age, first cleaning cars and then working through all the departments. I now run a Suzuki car dealership with my brother Jonathan in Hunstanton, Norfolk, on the same site that my dad started his business. We have been established since January 21st 1966, and it's something I'm very proud of."

The seeds of enthusiasm for BMWs in particular were sown fairly early on, when a family friend – Chris Rossiter – took James out to Cadwell Park for a passenger joyride in his E30 M3, something which indelibly inked the spirit of Bavaria onto his motoring jotter. Before long, James was buying a Sterling Silver four-door E30 325i as a daily driver and track

This is a driver's car, it has been beefed-up to 426hp thanks to a variety of upgrades





playing, a car which stuck with him through thick and thin for a good six-years. This was followed by a 325i Sport in Delphin Grey – although this was sadly stolen after three months of ownership. If F747 SRD is still out there, James would like it back, please...

Things leaped up a level with the next car, as modification crept into the formula with some degree of fervour. A 1989 E30 M3 was acquired, in Zinnobar Red with black leather; a non-sunroof car fitted with a 2.5 Sport Evo motor and assorted period AC Schnitzer upgrades. Spicy stuff, but by 2015 James was hankering for a more modern BMW to park alongside it...

Given his various swordsman adventures in tautly packed two-door M cars over the years, the decision here was a fairly easy one. "The 1M was the logical choice," he recalls, "but I had to find the right colour and specification. It had to be Valencia Orange, the right colour for a 1M, and I wanted to find one in the base spec plus Harmon Kardon speakers and Professional CD player; I wanted this spec as I feel for future values a car with a dated sat-nav will not be as sought-after." An eminently logical standpoint, although don't let this

The 1M sits on its original staggered 19-inch wheels painted Ferrari Grigio Silverstone, KW V3 coilovers lower the car to the road

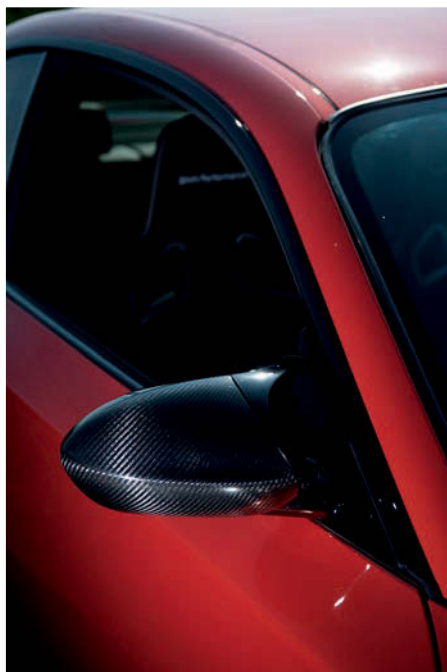


BMW Performance seats, a Milltek cat-back stainless exhaust system and carbon mirror caps were among items purchased from the car's previous owner





Forge intercooler and boost pipe are joined by Berger catch can and Gruppe M carbon induction setup



eye on future values lead you down a dark alley of speculation. Let's not forget James's enthusiasm for using these machines as they're meant to be used.

"I went to a few dealers, and ended up driving up to Leeds and putting a deposit down on a three-owner, 10,000-mile car," he says. "It was mint, and after agreeing on a price the previous owner opened up his garage to show me the spare parts he'd removed from the car – and I ended up buying all of them too! I got the Performance seats, a full Milltek primary cat-back stainless exhaust system, carbon mirror caps, angel-eye headlights, and a custom indoor car cover."

The seats are a particularly notable bonus here, as the BMW Performance seats are an ultra-obscure and supremely desirable option. They're no longer available to order, of course, and prices for used or NOS items across Europe are escalating to absurd levels. It's not unheard of to see upwards of £3,500 for a pair, so this is something that really makes James's 1M special.

"The idea was to keep the car fairly standard but, as always, my dear friend Aaron Reeve at A Reeve Performance had other ideas for me," he laughs. "Within three weeks we had fitted the Forge intercooler, Forge boost pipe with BOV, Berger catch can, full custom remap, and the exhaust system. I ran the car like this for about a year, covering 5,000-miles, and then we looked at sorting out the suspension as it was a bit of a handful on the standard setup! I opted for KW V3 coilovers, with a full custom

E82 1M

ENGINE & TRANSMISSION: N54B30T0 3.0-litre straight-six twin-turbo, Forge intercooler, Forge boost pipe with BOV, Berger catch can, Milltek primary cat-back stainless exhaust system, Milltek downpipes, Gruppe M carbon induction, custom remap, 6-speed manual, LSD

POWER: 426hp, 426lb.ft

CHASSIS: 9x19" (front) and 10x19" (rear) OEM 1M wheels – painted Ferrari Grigio Silverstone, 245/35 (f) and 265/35 (r) Michelin Pilot Sport 4 tyres, KW V3 coilovers, Goodridge braided brake lines, Mintex M1155 pads

EXTERIOR: Valencia Orange, carbon mirror caps, angel-eye headlights, carbon rear spoiler

INTERIOR: BMW Performance seats, Harman Kardon audio, Professional CD unit

"I've covered 36,000-miles in the 1M, and most of these have been on numerous trips across Europe,"

setup at A Reeve Performance – Aaron had just got back from two weeks training with KW in Germany. The V3s transformed the way the car handled, and we could play with the height to get it just the way I wanted.”

The 1M's brakes were pinched from the E92 M3 by BMW, and to this strong formula James has added Goodridge braided lines and Mintex M1155 pads. With the chassis handily evolving, some further attention was paid to the car's aesthetics, painting the OEM wheels in Ferrari Grigio Silverstone and fitting a subtle carbon boot spoiler. With a Gruppe M induction setup and Milltek downpipes then finding their way under the bonnet, the picture was complete.

“I've now covered 36,000-miles in the 1M, and most of these have been on numerous trips across Europe,” says James. “I have an Elite membership with Club GT350 who organise truly fantastic driving holidays, and I would highly recommend this club to anyone wanting to experience their car on some of the best roads in Europe. I've made the most amazing memories and friends from these trips, and I also regularly get out to Frankfurt for the annual 1M BBQ meet, which sees the world's largest gathering of 1Ms since they left the factory.”

This truly is a tale of a proper driver's car being properly driven. A model that's revered in the performance motoring world, which despite its tender years has already become a true-blue classic. A parts-bin special, perhaps – but these parts were perfect for the baby M car.

“People talk about values all the time,”



James muses, “and it's great that my car hasn't really depreciated since it was new. In fact, it has probably gone up in value! However, my cars are there to be driven and enjoyed, and that means thrashing the 1M on Alpine passes through Austria and around the legendary Nürburgring. Ultimately it's a Motorsport car, and I feel it's an injustice not to let it stretch its legs.”

Yes, the 1M is a genuine collectible for the

2020s and beyond. But that won't stop James and a variety of other eager owners using them as they were designed to be used. This car will be receiving a big-brake upgrade in the near future, as its turbochargers will be sent off to Pure Turbos in Belgium, with the net result topping the 500hp mark... the 1 Series M Coupé may be an icon, but that does not mean that it is untouchable ●



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Walk The Line

Swiss tuner Dähler created its own version of the M2 CS in 2016, now – using an actual F87 M2 CS as its basis – comes the DCL Dähler Competition Line...

Words: Simon Jackson Photography: Dähler



The company motto for Swiss BMW specialist Dähler is “if you want to overtake you have to pull out”. I guess what it means by that is that taking risks, putting yourself out there and getting noticed are a major part of getting noticed in the world of aftermarket car accessories. There’s no denying that driving a Dähler BMW will get you noticed.

The firm from Belp near Bern in Switzerland was founded 20-years ago by Christoph Dähler and aims its products at the “ambitious driver”. What you see here is the latest string to the Dähler bow, a reworked BMW M2 CS. Now, Dähler has been playing with the M2 since the model’s arrival in 2016, it was actually one of the first to heavily modify the baby M car. Out went to the S55 engine in its version and in came the M4 engine – transplanting the mill into the M2 Coupé and not stopping there, it also raised the power output too and fitted carbon ceramic brakes,

in many ways building its own take on the M2 CS. Now the story comes full circle, for Dähler has launched a package for the M2 CS, making the already spicy CS even hotter.

Squarely aimed at the BMW enthusiast in search of pure, unadulterated performance, the F87 M2 CS ‘DCL Dähler Competition Line’ comes in two states of tune; 520hp and 550hp, available for six-speed manual or seven-speed automatic versions. Perhaps most surprisingly the conversion is WLTP tested and EU homologated. The stage one level of tune provides 520hp with 516 lb-ft torque, stage two is for the export market only and gives 550hp with 545lb ft torque – in both instances the speed limiter is removed allowing for a top speed of 188mph.

Both conversion packages benefit from an Eventuri intake system and complete stainless steel exhaust system. The Eventuri Carbon Intake System has been homologated by Dähler in accordance with the very latest

sound and noise regulations, that EU (and Swiss) homologation means the upgrades can be legally installed, which is often a sticking point in Europe when it comes to aftermarket modifications, not so much an issue here in the UK. The Eventuri system increases engine performance by means of an inverted conical filter enclosed in a carbon/Kevlar housing – it makes use of the so-called Venturi effect. This results in a uniform airflow which not only increases performance but also improves response and creates a unique sound.

The stainless steel exhaust system features front and rear silencers designed and built by Dähler with a sporty and sonorous sound typical of its creations. The system has been developed especially for the two newest M2 models – Competition and CS. It’s a visual treat. The system’s rear silencer can be combined with the standard tailpipes or optional 90 or 100mm diameter Dähler tailpipes.

Suspension tuned specifically to the



vehicle also features. The Clubsport coilover suspension setup from Dähler is said to further increase vehicle agility. However should customers wish not the full coilover setup is not essential, if lowering purely for aesthetic purposes is required then a lowering spring kit can be fitted and adjustments made to the Electronic Damper System.

Under the arches come staggered lightweight 20-inch forged wheels wrapped

in Michelin rubber. The 'Dähler CDC1 Forged' measures 9 (front) and 10.5 x 20 (rear) and is available in a variety of colours. Inside come elements from the DRL Dähler Race Line; a rollcage and competition seats designed for clubsport or trackday use.

The M2 has become a major part of Dähler's current offering, which also encompasses other M models, but whichever M car is your flavour Dähler aims to optimise

its full potential to create a unique driving experience. True to its other motto: power, performance and pure fun, the M2 CS DCL Dähler Competition Line delivers a desirable package – Dähler's various improvements said to work in harmony to produce a heightened, enjoyable, sporty drive ●

CONTACT

Web: www.daehler.com



Market Watch

F20 125d

An affordable rear-drive five-door hot hatch that can top 50mpg? Look no further than BMW's F20 125d. Words: Guy Baker Photography: Various



BMW's M135i and M140i certainly deliver plenty of thrills, but at a price. Insurance, road tax and fuel costs all take their toll. And that's where the F20 125d comes in – offering close to the same performance and handling, but with significantly reduced running costs. No wonder it found so many satisfied buyers during its seven-year lifetime.

It doesn't possess a tuneable straight-six motor however, employing a high-powered twin-turbo four-cylinder diesel powerplant instead to maximise efficiency. But it's still brilliantly built, delivers all its power to the rear wheels and is an undeniably quick way to travel from A to B. And in practical F20 five-door guise outsold the F21 three-door version

by a ratio of two to one.

First unveiled in 2011 at the Frankfurt Motor Show, the rear-wheel drive 125d's N47 twin-turbocharged diesel develops 215hp at 4400rpm and claims a maximum torque of 332lb ft at 1500-2500rpm. 62mph arrives in 6.5-seconds and in-gear times are a close match for the M135i, yet the humble 125d can better 50mpg – with BMW claiming an official 57.6mpg combined economy figure. Top speed is 149mph.

New buyers could choose between a rugged six-speed manual gearbox and an optional eight-speed auto, and if they choose M Sport trim then their 125d also benefited from 18-inch alloys, a lower and more aggressive front bumper and blue

brake callipers, lower side-skirts, wider, gloss-black kidney grilles, a diffuser complete with chromed twin exhaust pipes and snug suede sports seats.

With four driving modes, ranging from ECO PRO through Comfort and Sport to Sport plus, other popular options with first buyers included the Visibility Pack, the Driver Comfort Pack, front and rear Park Distance Control, Cruise Control, Dakota Leather upholstery, a Harman Kardon HiFi and heated front seats. And handily, many examples sport most of these options.

March 2015 brought a LCI facelift with a new B47 engine producing 221hp at 4400rpm and 332lb ft of torque at 1500-3000rpm. The 0-6mph time came down



to 6.3-seconds and the official combined economy figure rose to an incredible 65.7mpg. In addition to the new engine and tweaks to the gearbox, there were also styling updates – with new bumpers and much sleeker rear light clusters. Production finally ended in 2019.

Despite being diesel powered, quite a few 125ds have covered relatively low mileages – so cars like this 42,500-mile Sapphire Black 2015 M Sport at Oakley Prestige in Basingstoke (www.oakleyprestige.co.uk) are quite common. Stickered at £14,795 this particular 125d is in outstanding condition both inside and out and comes with Enhanced Bluetooth, 18-inch M Light Double Spoke 461M alloys, a 6.5-inch colour screen, ADB Sport – Active Differential Brake, Sat Nav, CBC with Dynamic Stability Control Plus and DTC, Daytime LED running lights and headlights, Chrome exhaust tailpipes, front fog lights, M Sport Aerodynamic styling, anthracite headlining, a recent MoT and a full BMW service history.

A newer example with set you back more or course, with something like this 2017 £17,495 125d M Sport auto at Touchdown Motors in Bedford (www.touchdownmotors.co.uk) right at the top end of what we'd recommend paying. An offer of £17,000 is likely to be accepted for this White 38,000-mile two-owner example, which has not only a full BMW service history but also a plush spec, that includes; a Red leather interior, Harmon Kardon sound system, reversing camera, voice control, active cruise control, Adaptive M Sport suspension, 18-inch 461m Ferric Grey M

alloys and the Driver Comfort Package with heated seats.

Earlier cars are a lot cheaper however, and a few still have low mileages – like this perfect manual Grey 2012 BMW Approved Used 125d M Sport we spotted at Cooper Cobham BMW in Surrey (www.coopercobhambmw.co.uk). With just 38,378-miles on the clock it's advertised for just £11,254 and is well equipped too – with things like rear parking sensors, auto headlights with rain sensing, cruise control, the Driver Comfort package, the Sun Protection Package, 18-inch M Star-spoke style 386M alloy wheels, front fog lights, Anthracite headlining and the M Sport Package all included. And best of all it also comes with an Approved Used BMW warranty.

With more buyers concerned about buying diesel, the used market has seen values decreasing – but only slowly, because there is still a strong demand for such a small, practical, high-performance hatchback. We'd expect this trend to continue over the next few years. "It's a good car and the best diesel hot-hatch BMW have to offer," confirms Grant Darling at Sussex and Surrey specialists James Paul. "It's the ideal rep car for those who also want to have some fun!" And although values will decline, this can be minimised by buying a high-spec example and keeping the mileage below average.

As with all DPF-equipped diesels, the 125d needs frequent a long runs to prevent any potential clogging problems and yours must come with a full service history and no indications of early timing chain wear – like rattling noises from the rear of the engine or a

whirring sound at around 2000rpm.

Normally good for over 150,000-miles if properly cared for, some have failed much earlier – although later facelifted B47-engined 125ds don't seem to have a problem. Turbo wastegates have failed on a few cars, with a subsequent loss in compression and watch out for any gearbox selection issues – really put the transmission through its paces, and don't forget to try reverse! And also watch out for worn suspension components, tired clutches on manual examples and any annoying electrical malfunctions ●



Recent BMW 125d F20 auction prices*

Model	Transmission	Reg Year	Mileage	Sale Price
BMW 125d M Sport	auto	2012/12	84,805	£7,300
BMW 125d M Sport	manual	2012/62	99,918	£6,750
BMW 125d M Sport	auto	2014/64	31,901	£12,400
BMW 125d M Sport	manual	2015/15	40,540	£10,000
BMW 125d M Sport	manual	2015/15	37,931	£10,800
BMW 125d M Sport	auto	2016/66	8,923	£16,200

*Sale prices of good-condition examples sold recently at British Car Auctions

BMW Car retail price guide

Poor: Under £7,500

Good: £7,500 to £17,000

Excellent: £17,000+

Special editions: None

WITH THANKS...

James Sohl at Renaissance Classic Cars (www.renaissance-classics.co.uk), Grant Darling at James Paul (www.jamespaul.co.uk), Darkside Developments (www.darksidedevelopments.co.uk), the BMW Car Club of Great Britain (www.bmwclubgb.org.uk), British Car Auctions (www.bca.com), Silverstone Auctions (www.silverstoneauctions.com), www.bimmerforums.co.uk, Redish Motorsport (www.redish-motorsport.com) and Glass's Guide (www.glassbusiness.co.uk).

Workshop Wisdom



E46 Door Lock Repair

It's a very fiddly repair, but it only costs £3.00 and a bit of time to restore your E46 door lock to working order.

BMW's E46 was an altogether more sophisticated car than its E36 predecessor but that involves more complication and, when complicated things get old they often break. Whereas E36 door locks very rarely – if ever – break, the E46 ones certainly do. All E46s have remote locking with the key design changing late 2000 from the E36-style key with its easily replaced battery to the late 2000 (X-registration) 'Diamond' key whose battery is much harder to replace and often impossible for DIY'ers. That's progress!

The lock itself changed at this point (as does the handle and mechanism) and you can tell them apart as the later one is heavily recessed where the lock fits against the handle.

As the key battery dies, many owners just unlock the car manually on the key and because the lock is both quite fragile and made out of horrid die-cast metal best suited to Dinky toys, it breaks.

Our 2003 E46 saloon (the locks are all the same by the way) had both a dead key and a broken door lock meaning that entry had to be achieved by other means I can't discuss for obvious reasons.

A repair kit for the lock costs about £3.00 from a seller such as 'luyaoqiuna' on eBay, the first one we found. The kit contains parts for both left and right hand drive cars as the locks differ side to side.

Be aware that this job is incredibly fiddly and frustrating the first time (I've done loads) and you'll need a lot of patience. You'll also need a bench vice to grip the lock casing whilst you fight to get the tension spring back in at the end – I'm told a ballpoint pen casing is good for getting the spring fitted. An alternative is a used lock and key from another E46 and if you can be bothered with two keys it's an okay plan but it's nice to fix things properly, right?



1 Open the door, and remove the two-piece plastic cover plug. Insert a 4mm allen key and slacken the retaining screw all the way and push-pull the lock out. It can be reluctant.



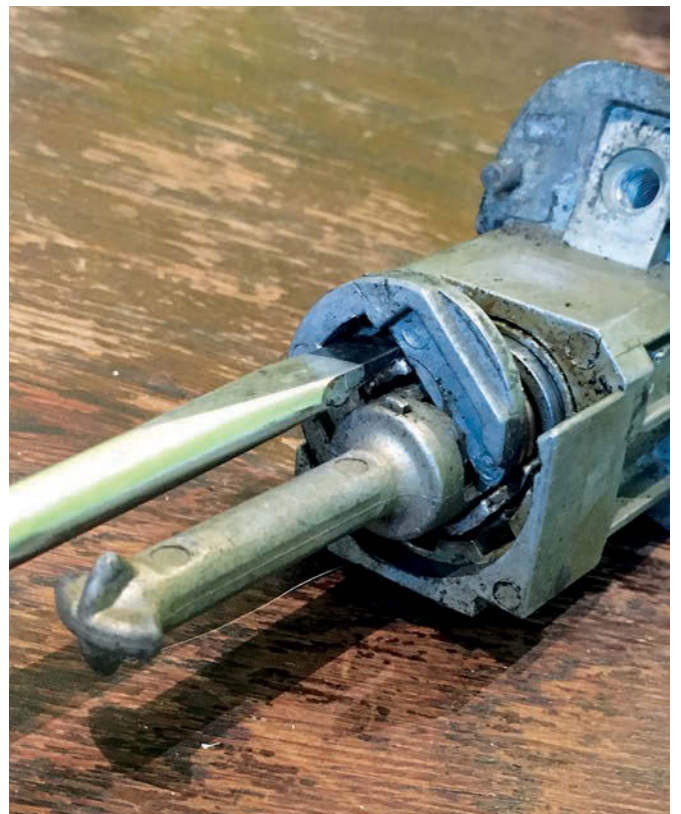
2 Use a small flat blade screwdriver and remove the painted plastic lock trim cap as shown to avoid damaging it later on.



3 The red line shows where the later door lock unit is recessed – older ones are flush here and they do not interchange.



4 Start taking the old lock apart by giving it a really good wash out with aerosol brake cleaner and then removing the small roll pin with pliers.



5 Holding the lock engagement pin in place with your fingers, pull the C clip out as shown. Spring pressure means it wants to fly apart. You may need to use the key to turn the lock as you do it.

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6 With the engagement pin out you can see the spring and also the lock parts inside – some if not all of this will be broken but all the parts are in the kit.



7 Taking a note of where the two inner parts here fit – a phone picture helps – remove the innards as seen here. Retain all broken bits and clean them all up for reference later.



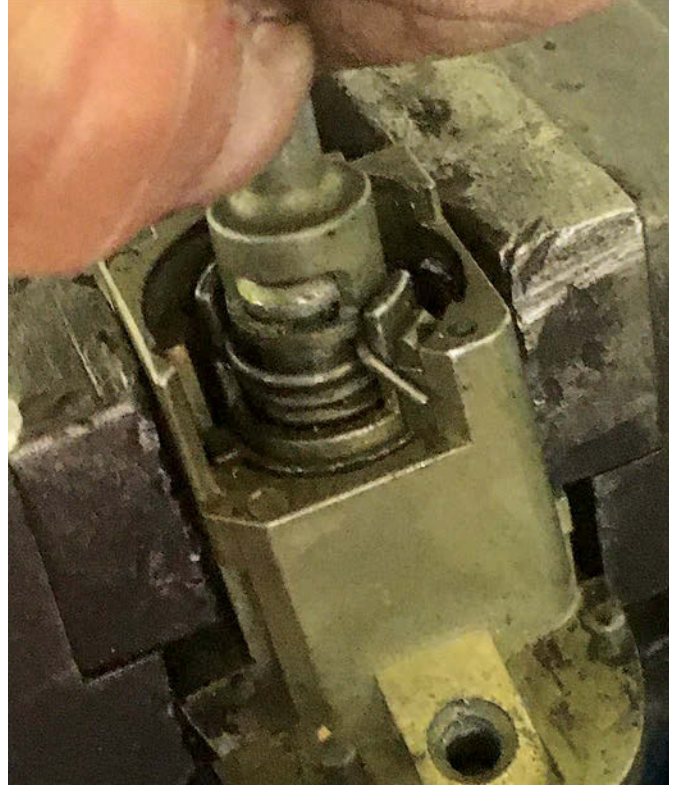
8 I used a secondhand lock without a key for the bits to fix this one. You can just see here that the original inner part has a split at 12 o'clock.



9 Matching the new parts to the old ones, first insert the lower lock part so that it looks like this. The red arrows point to the reference marks.



10 Now, matching the new part to the old one (they are handed, remember), fit the new inner part so that it fits like this. Assemble the lock dry for now.



11 The best is saved for last. Clamp the lock housing in a vice and with your three hands, fit the spring so that it sits like this and then fit the lock engagement pin as shown – it's great fun.



12 Now fit the C clip as shown and try the lock with the key – it should rotate either way and spring back. If not, take it apart and try again. All okay? Fit the roll pin and lubricate it all with spray grease.



13 This is the repair kit. Just about everything apart from the roll pin can snap – they were never particularly good as the car was designed for remote locking with the key for emergency use only.

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Our Cars

In association with


Warrantywise

Welcome to *BMW Car* magazine's fleet of vehicles... Here we share the trials and tribulations – both good and bad – of running a range of BMWs in the real world...

Bob Harper



2006
E61 530i SE Touring



1976
E3 3.0L

Elliott Stiling



2003
E46 325Ci Sport



1983
E28 Alpina B9



1989
E30 318i SE

Matt Robinson



2007
E61 M5 Touring

Andrew Everett



1988
E32 730i Saloon

Patty Harper



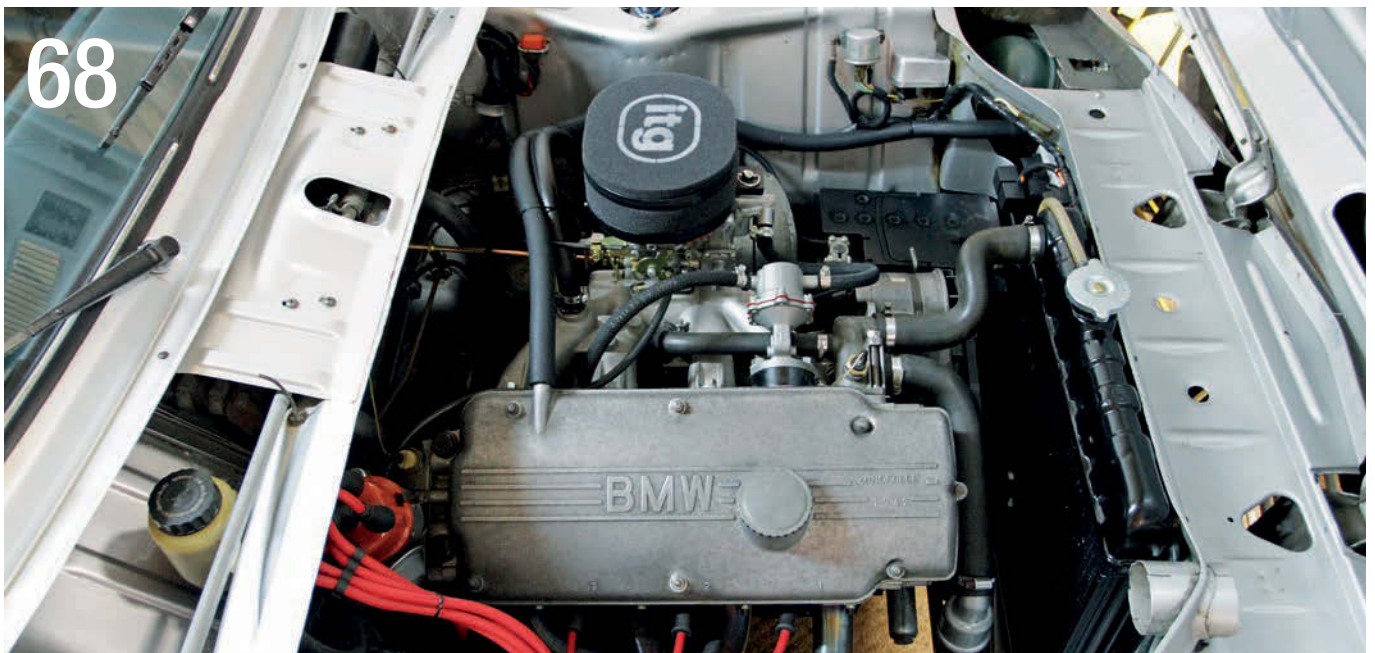
2014
F25 X3 xDrive20d SE

Rob Richardson



1973 2002

68



Bob Harper

2006 E61 530i SE Touring

1976 E3 3.0L

Planning Application

Bob updates us on his E61 530i SE Touring and E3...

Plenty of bimbbling about in the 530i this month including a trip over to Birds in Iwer (p42) and then a run up the M40 to Bicester Heritage for a BMW event (p3) as well as lots of local runs. As usual it's all been water off a duck's back for the Touring, taking all in its stride and keeping me cosseted from the outside world.

It's a very relaxing car to drive and this certainly helps when punting around London these days as I'm pretty sure that when I was younger and somewhat more prone to mild road rage I'd be approaching apoplexy with the current traffic conditions.

There are so many 'Low Traffic Neighbourhoods' in place now that

getting around can be somewhat trying. There's also a London North/South divide going on with Hammersmith and Vauxhall bridges both being closed so travelling across town is a serious headache and coupled with the extended Congestion Charge hours it really does make you think twice about jumping in the car. But at



the moment there's very little alternative – we're told not to use public transport yet they're making car use almost untenable too.

Still, with the heated seats on a low simmer and the massage function engaged the Touring is a supremely comfortable way to get around. BMW Comfort seats really are the best in the business and I can well understand why the original owner specced them, even if he must have baulked at the price. The only thing that's gone wrong this month is that the front fog lights have both misted-up – admittedly I never use them but it does look a little unsightly. I've not looked at them closely but maybe I should take them out and see if they can be resealed as they don't appear to have any stone damage. New ones from BMW are (unsurprisingly) quite expensive especially when they're never used so I might fit some aftermarket ones that seem to



E3 3.0L

YEAR: 1976

MILEAGE THIS MONTH: 140

TOTAL MILEAGE: 11,684

MPG THIS MONTH: 0

COST THIS MONTH: £Nil

E61 530i SE Touring

YEAR: 2006

MILEAGE THIS MONTH: 1146

TOTAL MILEAGE: 68,553

MPG THIS MONTH: 24.4

COST THIS MONTH: £ Nil





Right: The Touring's fog lights have misted-up



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cost from about £25 for a pair.

Lastly on the 530i it's just flashed up on the head-up display and in the dashpod that a service is required and delving into the iDrive shows that it's just a simple brake fluid change that's needed. With the MoT due I'll kill two birds with one stone and get both done at BM Sport in the coming weeks.

So, onto the E3. With the 3.0L's dodgy wiper stalk making driving in the rain a little bit of a hazard the 530i has been pressed into action thanks to the amount of rain we've had recently and somewhat typically the lack of use saw the E3 flatten its battery while trying to coax the poorly M30 into life. Touring to the rescue with the jump start and once the E3 burst into life I pointed it south to head down to Munich Legends in Sussex for a quick once over.

The run down to Munich Legends was most pleasant but these slightly longer trips in the car

always seem to add to the list of items which I need to attend to. The main irritation this time was the interior fan which started to produce a cacophony of squeaks and squeals after I'd been driving for half an hour or so and as I pushed on around some of the lanes closer to ML's HQ I did start to feel that the shock absorbers are rather tired than I remembered – it does get a bit roly poly during direction changes.

James who works in the restoration arm at Munich Legends quickly had it up on his ramp once I'd arrived and proceeded to give it a through inspection. There are plenty of worn bushes and other odds and sods underneath that will require attention before too long but perhaps more seriously James spotted that a couple of the seams in the rear arches don't look too clever once you peel away a little bit of the underseal. The most likely reason for this is slightly less

than perfect repairs that have been carried out in the dim and distant past when the E3 had been rear-ended. I knew it had had a whack but up until now I was under the impression that everything was tickety boo in that respect. Something else to add to the list...

It's the engine that is the main concern though and the options I have are to rebuild what I have and stick with the carbs – most probably the cheapest option, or my favoured route which would be moving over to fuel injection. The latter option is more complicated and could either utilise an earlier L-Jetronic based system or perhaps I should ditch my engine altogether and simply install the last of the line M30s with Motronic 1.3. The chaps at Munich Legends are doing some sums so I can work out the most cost effective solution, but until my engine's out of the car and stripped down we won't know the extent of the

damage in there, and hence how many new bits I'll need to buy.

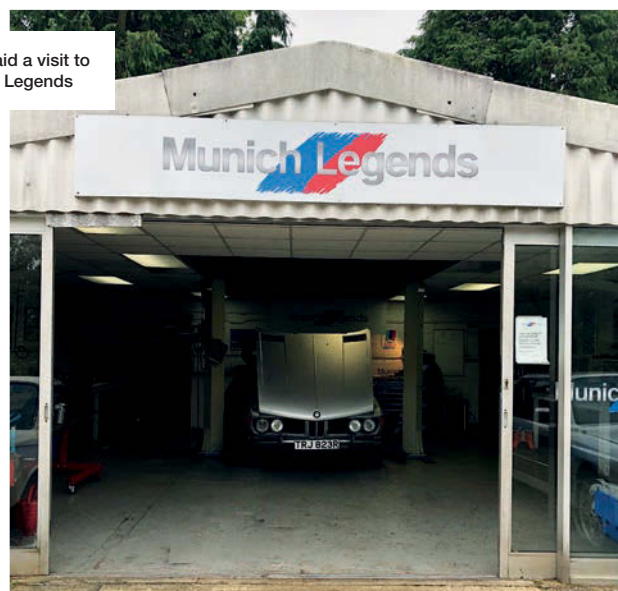
I think my favoured route will be just to buy a knackered – ie. terminally rusty – E24/E34/E32 and have the engine and associated gubbins from it to make my E3 live again. Alternatively an E23 or E28 might do (or even an E12 but they're almost as rare as the E3 now) so if you happen to have one sitting around that you want to get rid of do let me know! I do feel like the ball is about to start rolling now so having made the decision to get the E3 up and running I'm getting more excited.

I'm less excited about having to shell out barrel loads of cash, but you can't make an omelette without breaking some eggs so I'm just going to have to get on with it. Hopefully the E61 hears this news and doesn't throw up some potentially wallet wilting repairs when it goes in for its MoT.

Bob Harper



The E3 paid a visit to Munich Legends



Rob Richardson
1973 2002

Filtering Through

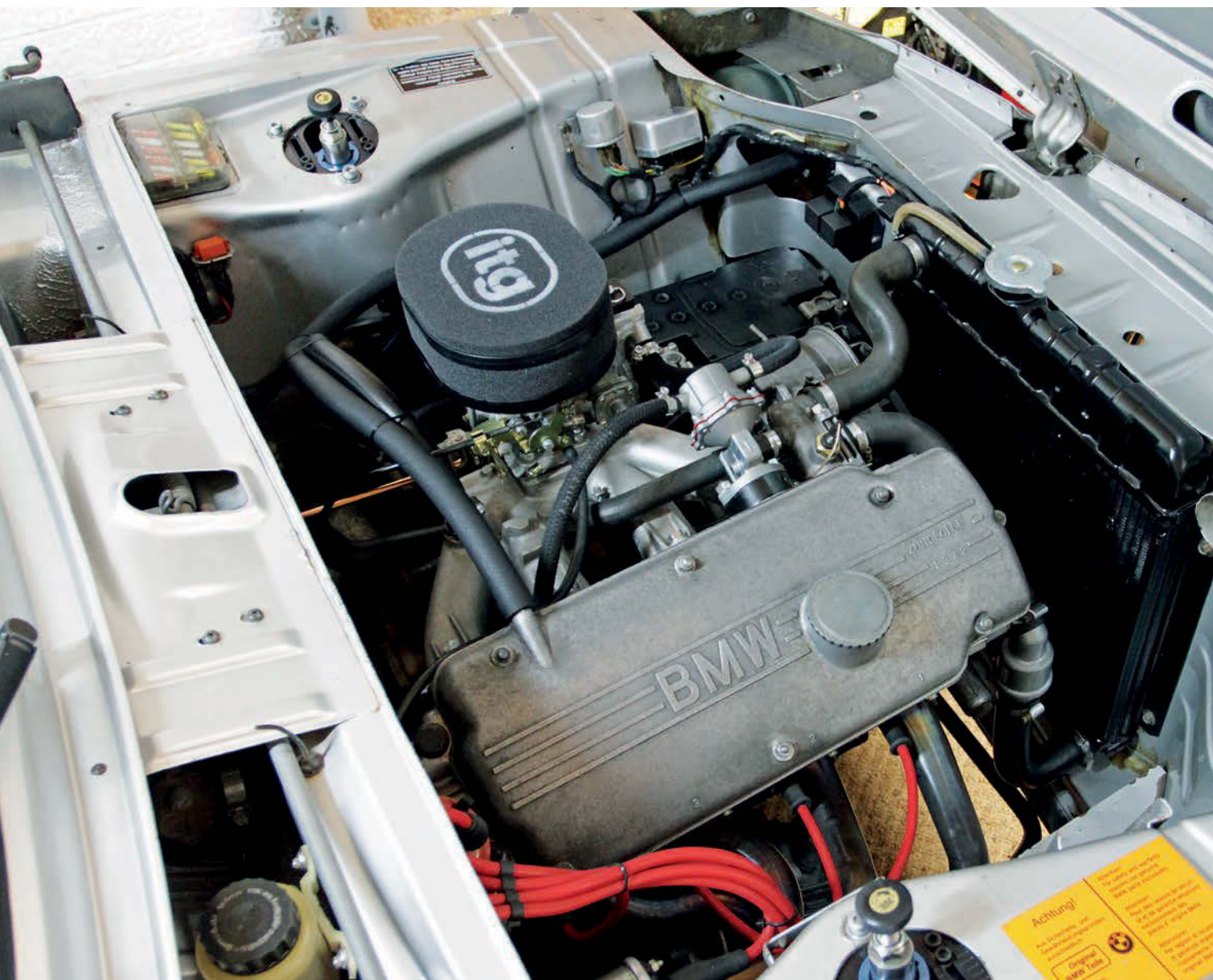
Rob fits a cool ITG filter...

The '02 continues to run perfectly and with a now almost diminished to nothing niggle list to attend to over winter, I've been really enjoying it. Car shows and meets have been few and far between, but a favourite I managed to get to once was Middleton Motors Monthly held at Middleton Hall in Tamworth. It's a great meet and well worth getting to if you're in

the area. However, it was at this event one glorious, non-cohesive part of the story I'd written for this car in my head (period weekend racer) became obvious. On lifting the bonnet while talking to someone at the meet and showing them round the car they commented "that's a nice chrome air filter". I shuddered. He was right, it is a nice chrome air

filter. But, I'd been so happy to have it and have the car running so well until that point I'd just not noticed how glaringly out of place it looked on a period, patinated engine bay, sat atop the beautifully time-worn surfaces and textures of the rest of the under bonnet. It suddenly felt like the sort of thing you'd find fitted to a rubber-bumper MGB with frilly

door bottoms and Rostyle wheels hand painted in Hammerite (complete with loose bristles still in the paint). You know what I mean: the sort of car you find at a local car show with a caulk board leaned up against it with pictures of it over the years and the owner on an old deckchair, sat not talking to anyone eating a plain ham sandwich. That life will come to



me, I can see it... but not yet and not with this car.

By now you know my approach of "everything has to be an upgrade" and after having ITG filters fitted to the twin 40s on my other car for 16-years, with no need to replace them yet and fantastic performance, I wanted the same for the '02. The Weber 32/36 carb is the same as is used (or it was when I was a lad) in Formula Ford and F2 stock cars, so ITG's filter (the JC10/20 Megaflow with a 3JC20 backplate) is a proper tried and tested piece of motorsport kit. Now available with a black frame (rather than the traditional ITG red), it was the perfect replacement and looked just right on the car. ITG



2002

YEAR: 1973

MILEAGE THIS MONTH: 230

TOTAL MILEAGE: 1540

MPG THIS MONTH: Some

COST THIS MONTH: Filter: £54,
Base plate: £19



Rob's new ITG JC10/20 Megaflow looks great



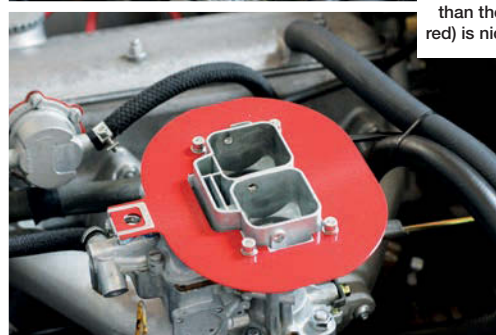
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Black frame (rather than the traditional red) is nice and subtle



have high performance filters for most applications from classics to current, race cars and can even offer a bespoke service with filters produced in 48 hours. Looking just right is one thing, but this filter offers quality and performance which are the product of over 30-years in top level of motorsport; from the foam to the filter frame, to the bespoke back plate, spacers and Dzus fastener for easy removal and install it's a quality item. The latter makes a huge difference when it comes to carb tuning, making it fast and simple to remove to get to the jets. Something I've had to do a lot of, be it in my garage or as you saw

a couple of issues ago, broken down in the pouring rain.

Install was as simple as four bolts replacing the original studs then slipping on the spacers included in the kit to clear the linkage and bolting down the base plate. The filter itself can then be clipped on and secured with the aforementioned Dzus fastener. On starting there was an audible difference to the old filter, it wasn't louder as such, but it was crisper sounding and, after some further tweaks to the mixture, the car felt stronger. Pin the accelerator and open both chokes and the M10 feels freer to breathe and sounds glorious for a single carb set-up.

Another great upgrade then and I've not had to buy a caulking board either. The car is away now for the winter and the short niggly list has given me more time than I'd planned for to work on it over this hibernation period. The question is what work should I do though? I'm not a fan of the brake booster set-up; it looks complicated and messy and while it does work, there has been the odd idle wobble that's got me suspicious about how long it'll live for. Time do to a bit of maths on pedal ratios and going booster-less I think... Battery relocation to the boot? Change of wheels...

Rob Richardson

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Trouble Shooter

Is the E85 Z4 2.0i worth buying? And, what are the common issues to consider?

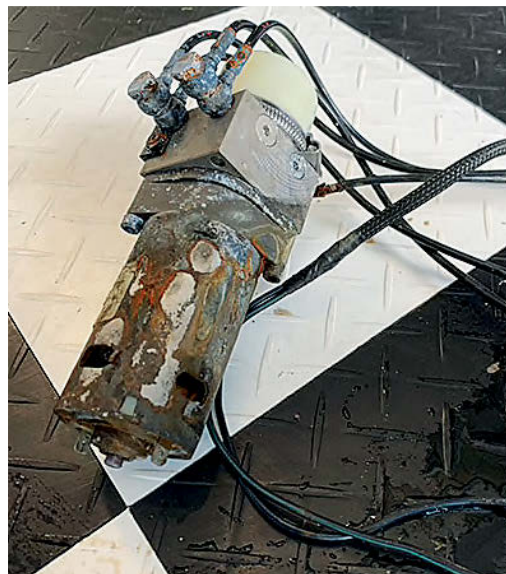
Words & Photography: Andrew Everett

It's a known fact that the 2003 to 2009 E85 Z4 – despite being a much better car than the Z3 – didn't sell as well. Part of that was a gradual fading of the nineties sports car phenomenon but the other problem was that the Z4 was more expensive and wiped-out the undecided who were teetering on the edge of buying a Mazda MX-5.

But, in 2006, the four-cylinder 2.0i version arrived to step into the shoes of the best-selling Z3, the four-pot 1.9. From the moment it arrived, the 2.0i Z4 became a big seller and made the 2.2i redundant. The lighter

engine gave the 2.0i arguably better handling (although the six-cylinder cars were superb) and with 150hp, it went well enough and would do a real 40mpg on a run – good luck getting that from a 2.2i.

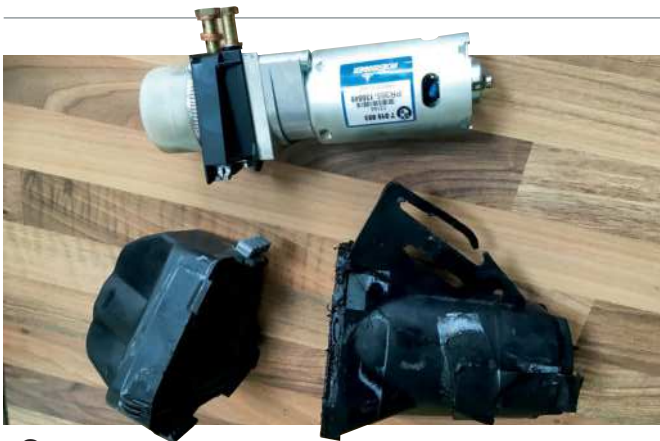
They're quite good cars but be aware that the engine is a bit of a problem child, it's not awful but has enough problems to make you reconsider a six-cylinder car and take the inferior economy on the chin. However, for the right money, a clean 2.0i with a good history can be worth buying.





1 Z4s very rarely go rusty and if they do it is normally underneath (due to being near the coast or in a harsher Northern climate). Built in the same Carolina factory as the Z3, the Z4 was one of the first BMWs to be fully galvanised – the E65 7 Series was first and the E85 and E60 followed. The front and rear wings unbolt and the ‘sills’ are actually plastic covers over the real sills.

2 Z4s all had a power hood which is both good and bad. Without a ‘horseshoe’ rear hood cover to operate, the hood only has a simple open and close mechanism that really didn’t need a motor – like the Z3. The Z4’s motor is in a pocket behind the passenger B-pillar and it can fill with rainwater – that turns the motor into rusty junk. Unlike the Z3 though, the Z4 motor is a pain to replace.



3 To replace the motor, the hood can be either removed or at least lifted up but you can do it from within the boot with the parcel shelf removed – it is very fiddly. To remove the hood, with the front hood clasp undone (two electric motors), there are two Torx bolts to be undone on each B-pillar after which the hood can be lifted up enough for an assistant to pull the motor out. There are two 13mm hydraulic pipe unions, a release cable and an electrical plug – it isn’t much fun.

4 To prevent this happening again, the motor/pump unit can be repositioned in the boot – this keeps it dry as well as making future repairs a whole lot easier. However, cleaning the plastic trough and enlarging the drain hole has the same effect. The motor is a 12v electrical pump that produces enough hydraulic pressure (around 3-400psi) to operate the hood. There is also a cable release on the motor to unlock the back of the hood where it meets the rear scuttle panel.



5 The N46 2.0i engine doesn't have the best reputation but like so many things, how it is looked after has a bearing on how long it lasts. The engine is known for many things; oil leaks, timing chain issues, Vanos trouble, the crankcase ventilation system (CCV) as well as various sensors failing. By 100,000-miles, many of them are in a pretty rough state and need much remedial action. A used engine from an E46 318i or E90 320i will replace a knackered one.



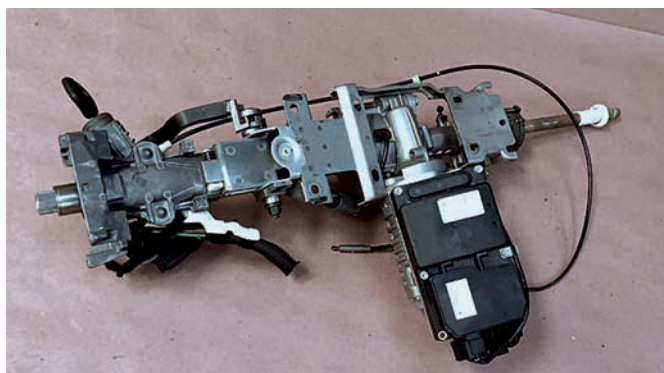
6 The N46 leaks oil from various places. The cam cover gasket is a favourite but it's easily replaced. The brake pump O-ring on the back of the head is easy on the Z4, and the gasket for the oil filter housing is nice easy DIY as are the Vanos solenoid O-ring. The sump gasket is a horrid job so leave that until last. It's an afternoon's work to clean the engine and replace the easy gaskets.



7 The timing chain is fairly notorious although the chain itself rarely breaks. It wears and extends, breaking the plastic guides with bits getting into the sump – and then getting sucked into the oil pick up which is very bad news. By now, most will need the whole lot replacing. The bits cost £150 from febi (OE parts) and it's better to do it before it breaks up as you won't need to remove the sump.



8 There are various parts that fail on the Vanos and Valvetronic system. The Vanos pulleys fail and the solenoid filters get clogged with gunk. If replacing a pulley, just carry on and replace the chain assembly. The Valvetronic sensor is an extortionate amount from BMW but there are plenty of used ones for £30 or so. A worn Valvetronic eccentric shaft can cause MoT emissions troubles.



9 For some reason, BMW elected to replace the hydraulic PAS of the E46 with an electric-powered column on the Z4 apart from the Z4M. The rack never wears out but the electric column can go stiff and if a shot of WD40 down the shaft under the motor (drill a hole in the outer tube) doesn't fix it, you're into a very expensive repair. We're told a conversion to E46 PAS is possible.



10 The Z4 is basically an E46 underneath so it holds few terrors. You're into rusty brake pipes, worn bushes and balljoints but none of it is expensive to fix. An exhaust blow from the engine bay will be a crack in the manifold which – although a pig to remove – is easy to weld and repair. Run flat tyres can be replaced by conventional ones, and the brakes are basically E46 so are all cheap enough to replace.

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103578

BMW ALPINA



2001, 108000 miles, £9,500. Switchconic, one year MOT, Full service history with over £4000 of extras. Please call 07909 601014, East of England.

103963

BMW CONVERTIBLE

2003, £2,200. BMW E46 Convertible 2003 330ci Sport – petrol. Unmarked silver paint blue hood with new roof lining. Unmarked grey leather, automatic. Previous owner BMW mechanic. M3 style wheels and excellent tyres. Harman Kardon hifi system. No service history. 5 owners. Please call 07828 637991, East of England.

104172

BMW E30 320i



1988, 67800 miles, £19,995. The car spent its first 14 years on Jersey explaining its low mileage. The car has been exceptionally well looked after having had 5 cambelt changes and comes with 18 service stamps and a huge history file with invoices, MOTs and old tax discs. Latterly the car has been looked after by renowned BMW specialists Classic Heroes based in Buxted. Please call 07885742090, East Midlands. (T)

103506

BMW ISETTA



1959, £13,375. All new upholstery in traditional tartan. New sun roof. All new interior panels. New Nerf / bull bars. New floor mat. All renewed front braking system and pads. Powder coated wheels (4). New door lock and 2 keys. Good starter. Serviced. Please call 01245 268552, South East.

103084

BMW M



2019, 2990 miles, £35,995. Stunning M135i xDrive Finished In Mineral Grey Metallic With Black Dakota Perforated Leather Interior. Fantastic Spec Inc: Panoramic Sunroof, M Plus Pack, 19" Bi-colour V Spoke Alloys, Head Up Display, Technology Pack, Harmon Kardon Sound System, and much more. Please call 01484543728, North East. (T)

103127

BMW M



2019, 3000 miles, £33,995. Stunning M135i xDrive Finished In Metallic Black Sapphire With Full Black Dakota Perforated Leather Interior. Fantastic Spec Inc: M Plus Pack, 19" Bi-colour V Spoke Alloys, Head Up Display, Technology Pack, Comfort Pack 2, Harmon Kardon Sound System and much more. Please call 01484543728, North East.

102174

BMW M2



2019, 10500 miles, £41,995. Finished In Hockenheim Silver Metallic With Black and Blue Leather Interior. Fantastic Spec Inc: M Performance LED Race Steering Wheel In Carbon and Alcantara With Cross Stitching In M Colours, Carbon Interior Trim, Rear Camera, Front & Rear Sensors, and more. Please call 01484543728

BMW Z3



1997, 33500 miles, £8,295. Metallic Arctic Silver with the custom 2-tone Red and Black leather interior. Widebody model with amazing specification example including switchable automatic, airbags, PAS, ABS, traction control, air-conditioning, electric hood, electric windows, electric mirrors, electric seats, heated seats, factory alloy wheels, boot lip spoiler and hard hood cover. Please call 01277365415

100309

BMW Z3



1999, 34000 miles, £5,295. Dark Green with special order Beige and Dark Green leather and Black power hood. Rare switchable automatic with the better 140 BHP engine. Full service history. Please call 01277365415, South East. (T)

103245

BMW Z3



1999, 78000 miles, £2,500. Lovely metallic blue collectible Z3 with M44 140bhp twin cam engine. No body rust, good interior, wheels and tyres - drives great. Mot'd to Sept - ready to go for summer. Please call 07501 901154, West Midlands.

102233

BMW Z4



2006, 64000 miles, £7,999. Grey metallic paintwork / black mohair roof / red leather trim, 6 speed manual, Service History. MOT 09/21 next service due 09/21. An amazingly fast car with a classic BMW look. Please call 07595 218406, South West.

103945

PARTS AND ACCESSORIES FOR SALE

BMW X5 FRONT GRILLES



2014, £19. Since upgraded, perfect, as new condition. Please call 07399359072, South East.

102523

BMC ALLOY WHEELS



£350. Style 207 wheels with Pirelli sottozero series 2 winter tyres. 2 off 7.5x17 with 205/50 with approx. 6mm tread depth. 2 off 7.5x17 with 225/45 with approx. 8mm tread depth. Please call 01993830014, South East.

103433

BMW CAR MAGAZINES

£100. October 1994 - December 2019. Only 3 issues missing, read once, mint condition. Buyer to collect. Please call 07989 979840, North West.

104061

BMW ALLOYS



£900. Original genuine BMW X3 alloys E8J x 18 complete with lightly used winter tyres Pirelli Sottozero 245/50 R18. Set of 4. Buyer collects. Please call 07961301259, West Midlands.

102787

BMW M2 COMPETITION 2NH BRAKE SETUP



2019, £1,500. BMW 2NH M Sport Brakes - Calipers, Discs and Pads - Front and Rear Brake upgrade removed from a 2019 M2 competition. These brakes are used, however the front discs, calipers and pads have only c.2000 miles use and the rear discs, callipers and pads have had c.13,000 miles of use. The brakes were removed from car and replaced with standard setup by BMW (blue calipers) due to 'binding' issues caused by under use. This is a fairly common complaint with this braking system so please research this to be sure you are comfortable before purchasing. Collection only from South Edinburgh. Please contact me with any queries. , Scotland.

103961

BMW WHEELS

£200. Set of 17" x 8" bmw wheels.style 236. with Goodyear Excellence run flats with delivery mileage [off 5 series f10] that I purchased from BMW dealer some time ago with intention of using, but have since sold the car. They are in amazing condition and alloys are like new, tyres have 8mm tread with coloured bands still showing, £ 800. Also have an identical set of wheels that are used but still in beautiful condition, tyre tread depth from 5mm to 7mm, no puncture repairs, balanced and ready to use, £ 450. Have a couple of spare Goodyear Excellence runflat tyres 225 55 17, around 5-6mm. 50 each. Please call 07999 580474, East of England.

104096

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